NATIONAL TRAITS AS REVEALED IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY FAMILY NOVELS OF ENGLAND, RUSSIA, GERMANY, AND FRANCE

Hortense Lillian Harris

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THESIS

NATIONAL TRAITS AS REVEALED IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY FAMILY NOVELS OF ENGLAND, RUSSIA, GERMANY, AND FRANCE

by

Hortense Lillian Harris

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NATIONAL TRAITS AS REVEALED IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY FAMILY NOVELS OF ENGLAND, RUSSIA, GERMANY, AND FRANCE.

I. Introduction

A. Scope

In this thesis the author has aimed to compare national characteristics of the upper middle-class nationals in the nineteenth century to the end of contrasting English traits with continental traits and of showing that national character has been a powerful force in the novel.

B. Importance of Problem

The problem is important inasmuch as the novel is determined by the national characteristics of the people who, in turn, are the natural outgrowth of their heritage, environment, and age. "A work of literature is not a mere play of imagination, a solitary caprice of a heated brain, but a transcript of contemporary manners." (1)

C. Previous Investigation

In the course of extensive research, the writer has uncovered no work previously compiled on this subject.

D. Method of Research

From the reading of The Forsyte Saga, by John Galsworthy, the writer conceived the idea for this thesis. The method employed has been that of general to particular. The writer began by consulting histories of literature dealing with the nineteenth century novelists of England, Russia, Germany, and France. Having secured these data, the author, from correspondence with book reviewers, librarians, and professors of

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(1) English Literature, Hippolyte A. Taine. Vol. I Introduction

comparative literature, compiled a bibliography of such authors whose novels portrayed characters who might be called national and typical. The characteristics revealed in the novels chosen were checked by reading of books on national traits of each country.

II. The Heritage of Ages Past

Heritage Analyzed

The fact that dogs differ materially in their various characteristics in accord with their breed is an undisputed fact. "These are for hunting, these for fighting, these again for house dogs or shepherds' dogs". (1) And so of men. Some are by heritage innately religious, some stolid and insensitive, some devoted to matters of state, some given to scientific investigation, and some to morbid introspection. These principal characteristics representing a "primitive imprint" may be distinguished always underneath "secondary imprints" stamped above by environment and age.(2) Heritage itself is a distinct force, nor is it fundamentally changed by surroundings, for in the beginning it was forced to reconcile itself to these surroundings. Geographical location, climate, temperature, are all forces in the growth of heritage; otherwise how explain England's Anglo Saxon epic with its innumerable references to the "swan road", the "whale path", and the "heaving battle plain" - with its landscape painting, its mound of stones by the sea sands erected as a tribute to Beowulf, its blasts of tempests, its rush of the hurricane, man's eternal struggle with the forces of nature, its banquet halls with "Music and song where the heroes sat" and the secret of Beowulf's tempestuous life summed up in the last line, "ever yearning for his people's praise".

Heritage of the English

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(1) Taine - op. cit.

(2) Taine - op. cit.

Heritage of the Russians

Or how explain Russian literature with its spiritual struggle, its social and political controversies, its sadness and melancholy mysticism but by a study of Russia's heritage of raids by Mongols and Tartars with their sequel of murder and slavery, a struggle against inclement nature, the expanse of the Steppes, the endless forests, and serfdom. All these may be read into Russia's cycle of epics (for there is no great Russian Iliad), her stories of the Kiéff Prince, Vladímir the Fair Sun, who cleared Russia of the giants (Mongols and Turks) who infested the land, who sought no revenge as did the Scandinavian heroes but who was imbued rather with the communal spirit, and for whom the historical world did not exist except as it came into contact with Russia.(1)

Heritage of the Germans

And is not German literature to-day an outgrowth of Siegfried and the hosts of German heroes who sacrificed self first for their family circle and then for society at court and their companions in arms; who led a noble secular life, a life of fighting and of many duties; whose early ancestors, according to Julius Caesar and Tacitus, were barbarous, pagan warriors loving freedom, hardening themselves by physical suffering, with a reverence for womanhood and the sanctity of the marriage tie as emphasized by Brunnhild's loss of superhuman strength with her loss of virginity. The ancient Teutonic ideal was based upon "Treue" (faithfulness or fidelity), a faithfulness unto death; the loyalty of a vassal for his lord, as depicted in Hagen; the fidelity of the wife for her husband, as shown by Kriemhild, carried out with unhesitating consistency to the bitter end. (2)

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(1) Russian Literature, Ideals and Realities, P. Kropotkin

(2) The Nibelungenlied, Translated by Daniel Bussier Shumway

Heritage of the French

And is not the religious fervor that makes a Frenchman's battle cry "For God and France" the epitome of Roland's ideal when,refusing to blow his horn and bring aid to his men, he carried each dying hero to the militant Archbishop Turpin to receive his blessing. In Renaud de Montauban, another of the French chansons de geste, we find Renaud desiring to kill his children, when he learns that his brother-in-law Ganelon has betrayed Charlemagne, for so strong is the French family feeling that Renaud fears that his children may have inherited traitorous blood through their mother's veins. (1) The old French chansons de geste were expressions of heroic sentiment born at the firesides of great families, replete with old traditions feudal at heart, but emphasizing always the "joie de vivre" to be gained from partaking in holy wars and the "joie d'amour" of returning to the loved ones having brought honor to the family circle.

The "Secondary Imprint"

While this "primitive imprint", the natural heritage, is easily discerned from the national origins in literature, the "secondary imprint" stamped above by the complexity of modern existence and the changes brought about by inter-racial contacts, can be viewed only through a multiplicity of lenses, since its very proximity to the eye affords no perspective. This has increased the difficulty of my problem of comparing literatures to determine national characters. In the main, however, the "secondary imprint" viewed under the microscopic lens of research merely merges into the ensemble sufficiently to make the world kin.

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(1) The National History of France, Funck-Brentano, Jacques

III. The Years Between

A. ENGLAND

Religion

Although it was an essayist from the north of England (Scotland, to be exact), who said that the most important thing regarding a man was his religion(1), the Deity in England has been malingering since the eighteenth century. God exists for the Englishman mostly to sanction his way, and the only God the Englishman recognizes is the God of the English National Church. (2) The American notion of the church as a club, or as a social ladder does not obtain in England, where the majority of churches are private property. When a large estate is purchased, the parish church or churches go with the other property. The landlord chooses the clergyman for every parish on his property, so that to him goes the revenue attaching thereto. For this reason the clergy are great believers in the doctrine of compromise. With the advent of the nineteenth century and Victoria's noble example, the English began an ardent worship of the Stork, and religion as such took on a Micawber aspect and began to toy with such abstractions as the "Unknowable", "the World Spirit", and Evolution. Children were taught that the Lord was above, but Papa was listening at the door below to enforce God's will on earth. Lower still was Hell. (3) Religion was a stern and joyless discipline. If any love entered into it, it was, says Wingfield-Stratford, because God would make it hot for you if you didn't love him.

Morals

For this reason morality was taught by threats and punishments. The Victorian rod never rusted from lack of use. The Victorians were conscientiously and earnestly moral to an extent never paralleled before

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(1) Heroes and Hero Worship, Thomas Carlyle

(2) England and the English from an American Point of View, Price Collier

(3) Those Earnest Victorians, Esmé Wingfield-Stratford

or since. Theirs was a solid morality lacking in Christlike inspiration. It was a morality imposed from without. They heeded the voice of Mrs. Grundy. Their moral code was in brief:

1. It pays to be good.
2. If you must sin, don't talk about it. (1)

One encouraged vice by acknowledging one's awareness thereof. The Victorians had an ostrich-like faith that evil was conquered if only one shut one's eyes to its existence. If morality was a question of sex, it must never be discussed; i.e. in polite and genteel parlours and drawing-rooms where Mrs. Grundy presided.

True, Victorian girls indulged in orgies of archery, polka, water colours, valentines, and clandestine correspondence; while Victorian youths worked hard, but found time to be "raffish in Regent Street, or ogle in Birdcage Walk, and regretted the siege of Paris because it cut off the intermittent headquarters for naughtiness and the needs of the flesh." (2) Wrong, however, was punished and good rewarded in the next world, but England could and must be right. Therefore, since the English were not nudists, the heathen of the Dark Continent should wear clothes. In London "arty" young women affected the beauty immortalized by Burne-Jones and Rossetti, while agnosticism and evolution gained headway. The refinement of mixed society was compensated by the grossness of masculine intercourse. When a Victorian gentleman shed his evening clothes, the act was symbolic. His smoking room stories were racy and vulgar. The Victorian Era, so-called, ended long before the death of Victoria. Prosperity loosened London habits, and "strait-lacing" became only a female concomitant. What was sauce for

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(1) Wingfield-Stratford - op. cit.

(2) This Was England, Alan Bott

the goose was by no means fit for the gander or the young gosling; so mid-Victorianism long dominated the outward aspects of the age. About 1890 tired by the long earnestness, disrespect was adopted by adults only, but the nineteenth century conscience lingered on through the Edwardian Era when the younger generation began to put out its tongue at Victorianism. Then came the Great War with its platitudes, its beastly carnage all mixed up with fine comradeship and broken idols. Disinfected of Victorian unreality, with a hatred for the hypocrisies, the vaunted humanitarianism, the inhibitions of their elders, this new generation in the hysteria of war stripped conversation of all decencies and with one sweep called a "strike" in the alleys of Victorian repressions.

Family Life

The Victorian woman is described as a sweet virgin merging into a docile matron, a fragile fainter, "a guardian of the refinements and amenities of life".(1) Yet the evolution of the Victorian girl to the Victorian old lady is a miracle more startling than the Darwinian theory - to be understood only when we suppose that the "Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever" put off childish things when she put up her hair; for the Victorian Mama would have put her foot down and flatly refused any nonsense of being emancipated and would have run roughshod over her emancipators as only a defenceless woman can. (2) If we are to believe Victorian fiction, we find hen-pecked men dominated by Mrs. Caudles, Mrs. Squeerses, Mrs. Bumbles, and Mrs. Rawdon Crawleys. Yet, as Wingfield-Stratford says in Those Earnest Victorians, it was left to the era of the emancipated woman to create the Sheik lover whose charming appeal lay in his caveman tactics - the only Victorian cavemen were Heathcliff and Rochester, creations of two more or less sex-starved sisters.

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(1) Wingfield-Stratford - op. cit.

(2) Wingfield-Stratford - op. cit.

The marriage chamber, however, was invested with the taboo of absolute secrecy. Many a battle must have been waged in its privacy.

> "The room was the Holy of Holies in the vast chamber of middle-class domesticity. . . . Mama toiled and intrigued, with indefatigable zeal, that she might see the last of her brood of daughters pass beyond her ken and authority into the Unmentionable. To attain this consummation, innocent Flora exposed a virginal bosom, and pinched and expanded her contour to hint at charms that nature never owned. . . . Once the goal was attained and the door closed, there was no appeal and no escape. . . . If a wife left her husband it was assumed that this could only be with a blackguard of the deepest dye."(1)

"Home Sweet Home" was the typical song hit. Parents-in-law and husband demanded children and more children. It was an age of production; Victoria's example was symbolic of her time. The cult of the double bed is behind most Victorian morals and manners. Married love was held in honor and lofty idealism. Tennyson's priggish Arthur was truly Victorian. Christian pity might be extended to the fallen, but punishment was sure to follow any female violation of sexual taboos.

In every sense of the word, the Victorian era was an age of men. England, in truth, is a land of men, ruled by men, obedient to the ways and comforts and prejudices of men. Here the male bird has the brilliant plumage. But the women! Hats, clothes, shoes, colors, figures! The men dress and the women are clothed.(2) This poor taste is acquiesced in by milord inasmuch as economies in the English home begin with milady. The food, too, is for the masculine stomach - a nation of beef-eaters - meat, meat, meat - spelled usually mutton. Taine writes that where a Frenchman eats a sheep and a half a year, an Englishman eats four sheep. On entering an Englishman's house one notices how well his house is adapted to him. The establishment is carried on with prime view to his comfort, not as in America with a prime view to the woman's

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(1) Wingfield-Stratford - op. cit.

(2) Price Collier - op. cit.

taste. An Englishman is much at home in his own house, more so than the American. He is absolute master there. He gives to it far more time than does the American. He leaves home later in the morning and returns to it earlier in the day. "An Englishman is continually going home; an American is continually going to business." (1) From the fact that Englishmen who visit America are impressed that it is a country of women, Price Collier deduces that the Americans make better husbands, and the English better wives. English women take it for granted that their husbands' pleasure and comfort and even amusements should take first place. An American woman considers as her prerogative the choice of pleasures and leisure activities. In England it is the husband rather than the wife who is looked to to advertise the family's prosperity. When reverses come, the sacrifices are made by the women. To save for the many avocations and interests economy must be practised, always by the women.

The young and old are more together than here in America. At dinner in town, at house parties in the country, there is not the sharp dividing line of age. Fathers and sons, uncles and nephews, are much more at home with one another and have, apparently, more in common. The younger children of wealthy parents must learn to fend for themselves; this is the law of the land,and the colonies offer a solution to younger sons. This practice makes for the wealth and spread of the nation, since property is concentrated in a few hands and the colonies reap the benefits of good blood for population and upbuilding.

General Characteristics.

Few people can possess an equal portion of common sense and imagination. Imagination is likely to dazzle one's common sense as the

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(1) Price Collier, op. cit.

latter is to dull the former. Since character came first with the Victorian, cleverness before the age of twenty was a dubious asset. The French and Americans call the English "dull". This dullness, however, the Englishman calls "steadiness", a quality the English demand above all others in their statesmen, their soldiers, their horses. There is no talk of glory. England expects every man to do his duty; that is all. The glory and the advertising will take care of themselves. It is "bad form" to talk about one's self; it is unsporting to indulge in personalities; it is boasting to discuss religion, art, literature. There is nothing left but the weather. Because of this singleness of purpose, this lack of diversity of interest, we think them dull - "mentally constipated", a recent author dubs them. (1)

Education

While America has devoted herself to the fetish of universal education, England has realized that asylums for the insane are peopled by those whose brains are too active or too morbid; not by those who are slow and dull. Accordingly she has devoted her energy to the task of conquering, colonizing, and governing. A profound instinct warns her against general intelligence; she educates the classes to rule. The Germans are beginning to see that while their own schools educate their youths, they fail to train them. The English public school-boy, taught habits of self-respect and responsibility by the monitorial system, is governing all over the world, while the German boy serves him as a clerk. (2) The Germans and French, too, are realizing that if they would colonize successfully, they must produce men who can govern. Neither German nor French **schools** do this. The English

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(1) Britannia Waives the Rules, Thelma LeCocq and Frances Douglas

(2) Price Collier - op. cit.

school-boy is far more to be depended upon, far more companionable, and much more at home in the world. French and German youths acquire book learning. If the three go to the colonies, Price Collier sees the French boy keeping the books, the German attending to the foreign correspondence, and the English boy managing both.

No chapter on the English would be complete without a word on sport. The English public school exalts physical prowess. The mild English climate is conducive to an out-door life to the extent that one rarely finds an Englishman not interested or participating in some kind of sport. This is, perhaps, a throw-back to the "primitive imprint". Love of the land and out-door life have prevailed through all centuries of Great Britain. Sport assumes the dignity of tradition as well as furnishes an outlet for the Englishman's animal virility. It is this out-door England, of hills and valleys, green fields and hedges that Englishmen love. Nor would they have her changed. For the Englishman there is but one reason for everything, "It has always been so".

On all sides he is surrounded by centuries of past ages. For that reason, perhaps, class distinction remains almost in its pre-war status. The middle class Englishman represents the brains of his country. So he has always been regarded as a snob. Although democracy has made some headway in England, it is still evident that the Englishman likes his leaders to be gentlemen - especially in the army. Instinctively the English have faith in "noblesse oblige" as a real factor in life.

Literature

Because Victorian England was an age of character in life, it was an era of character in fiction. What an age of supermen, of Iron

Dukes, of Nelsons, of Disraelis, of Kitcheners. What a gallery of characters from Dickens, from Thackeray, and from Browning. This so-called dull race has produced the greatest literature since Homer and Virgil. Perhaps this very greatness arises from the fact that the English are not a nation of chatterers, but a nation of doers, and a nation of great deeds and great men must of a certainty inspire a great literature.

"In almost any age of English literature, or indeed of any other literature, an experienced critic can detect the tone of the epoch at once in prose or verse." (1) A novelist must address the people of his own age. "The nineteenth century developed passionate interest in human beings." (2) It was an age in which art, literature, manners, and morals were made subservient to the ideals and hypocrisies of the upper-middle class. But like all else, "it came to pass", and like Sir Bedivere found new faces, other minds. From the God's in his Heaven theory it passed to agnosticism. Fate, or retribution of the late Victorians, gradually went out of fashion, and men who sowed the wind no longer reaped the whirlwind. Post-war materialism is, however, more honest at heart than the Victorian veneer of sentimentality and respectability wherein there was nothing either good or bad but other people's thinking made it so. (3)

Exton Manor

by

Archibald Marshall

The main theme of Archibald Marshall is the English country house and family with its narrow mistaken loyalties - the English leisure class, who forsake the town for the country and are content with the simple activities of a country parish. In Exton Manor Mr. Marshall gives us a picture of Lady Wrotham of Exton Abbey, an

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(1) Studies in Early Victorian Literature, Frederic Harrison

(2) The Modern English Novel, Abel Chevalley

(3) Later Critiques, Augustus Ralli

autocratic old woman, who from her big house dominated the lives of the lesser ones who lived in her environs. Since the church was owned and supported by her, the vicar was her servant subject to her whims, and bound to conform to her religious principles. Because of a disagreement in the church ritual, Lady Wrotham brought about the vicar's resignation. A few of the dwellers in Exton Manor rebel against English social customs. Captain Turner voices himself as follows: "That's the curse of English life. Why should I have to go and show myself to an old woman I don't care twopence about, because she lives in a big house and I live in a small one? I pay my rent regularly enough, and my rates and taxes too. Why can't I be let alone." Because of this avowed rebellion on the part of Captain Turner, Lady Wrotham declared herself opposed to long leases. They gave a person who was not well disposed toward a landowner the power of annoying him.

Mrs. Redcliffe is a victim of the English marriage laws. Her marriage in Australia to her dead husband's brother was illegal in England (until 1908) and almost brought upon her and her daughter Hilda a social ostracism.

The social lights of Exton are the Ferrabys, who rented the shooting preserves and owned country houses in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Tono-Bungay

by

H. G. Wells

Every reader of Mr. Wells knows that he has a sociological axe to grind. In this rather discursive novel Wells gives a diagnosis of the break-up of English society during the second half of the nineteenth century.(1) Tono-Bungay is the story of a rise from comparative poverty to affluence on a wave of patent medicine. Class distinctions are made

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(1) Twentieth Century Literature, The Age of Interrogation, A. C. Ward.

obvious.

"In the English countryside of my boyhood every human being had a place! It belonged to you from your birth like the colour of your eyes, it was inextricably your destiny. Above you were your betters, below you were your inferiors, and there were even an unstable questionable few, cases so disputable that you might for rough purposes of every day at least, regard them as your equals."

Another truly English bon mot here is "It's trade that makes the world go round! Argosies! Venice! Empire!" And again, "Trade rules the world."

The Balliols

by

Alec Waugh

In The Balliols, a recent English novel, Alec Waugh has depicted the life of the Balliol family from the Victorian nineties through the early nineteen hundreds, when the generation that was to face the Great War was busily engaged in clearing from Victorian whatnots and their own minds Victorian bric-a-brac and horsehair furnishings, on down through the decade of despair (the nineteen-twenties) full of anarchy, dictatorship, dole, and a future of hell or a new golden age.

The Victorian Balliols, Edward and Jane were even then heeding the changing order. Their real estate agent, a youth in the early twenties represents progress; he had begun where his parents left off. There were women in society who actually made up their faces, put on powder and rouge, and blacked their lashes. Surely, decent women wouldn't. Childhood lived through a drab gentility of prim starched Sundays, and long winter evenings with occasional treats to which days had been counted on the calendar.

This era had framed the courtship of Jane and Edward.

"During their decorous Victorian engagement when it was considered improper for women to ride in hansoms, and evening excursions had demanded chaperones, they had ridden out in parties of four or six; he in a knickerbocker suit and belted jacket; she with a high-necked

white blouse and straw hat perched forward on her head, scouring northern lanes through long autumn afternoons."

Edward's sister Stella was a family problem. Most girls were content to fill the probationer's period to marriage with "tennis, croquet, water-colours, crochet, piano, and Marie Corelli". Stella wanted a university degree, an independent latch-key, a chequebook, and brush-braid on her skirt. She flaunted every popular conception of womanly qualities, of all that Victorians revered: modesty, delicacy, sensibility - Stella was a militant suffragette.

Back in the Georgian days when the Balliol homestead was built, the lot of a country gentleman was to die under the roof where he was born. He inherited the home and responsibilities handed by his grandfather to his father. Education was a matter of discipline, of sprinkling one's conversation with a classical tag or two. This for the male was an accomplishment comparable with the water colours and piano scales of débutantes. A man's job was to look after his land and his tenants, pay his tithes, and take his place in the family pew on Sundays. Regrettably sons were going into trade. Edward Balliol, however, like Soames, must find a more proper setting. He must build a new house, thereby starting a tradition and founding a family.

In Book II Lucy, the eldest daughter, in emulation of Aunt Stella, cracks the glass in the Charing Cross post office and yells, "Votes for Women", but is met by blank silence, for the English never interfere if they can help it. To her sister Ruth she confides the tales of the men who had kissed her. Lucy can remember them all, both of them. She admits that, while she feels enlightened in

comparison with her grandmother, she really knows little about the things she wants to know. "No one'll tell us. It's not in any book."

In Book III Ruth becomes the central figure. She is the Georgian era brought up by Victorian parents. She has no latch-key unless she explains her engagement. Through her brother she meets Victor Tavenham who evokes for her a world foreign to her own, where the Victorian idea of a chaperone persisted because of the typically British point of view that no mischief could befall a girl before midnight and that there was no kind of mischief that might not befall her after. Ruth belonged to the age of interrogation; Victor seduced her the first night.

Then came the Great War. Young men no longer saw the future in terms of firesides and cradles as did their fathers. Hugh belongs to the "hothouse atmosphere of wartime" where there was no postponement, as to-morrow might never dawn.

So the "secondary imprint" becomes temporarily befogged as war telescopes events. In five years it achieved changes for which a normal process of effect and cause would have required fifty. Francis represented the post-war generation for whom the war ended before they became of age. His was the reckless youth of dissipation - the aftermath of war. And then came Helen, the youngest Balliol, for whom the war did not exist except as history.

Lucy married and became the Victorian matron, who longed to discipline the younger generation, and whose husband would refuse drivers' licenses to any unmarried woman under twenty-five. Yet as the new is bred out of what is old, so Edwardian England in its contrasted

gaiety is explained by Victorian England. Helen's attitude toward marriage and a husband were far more Victorian than Ruth's. An affair was a ready solution for Ruth; for Helen an affair was merely a wasting of emotion. It was so easy there was no point to it. Nevertheless Helen was no prig. She had none of the Victorian simple faith in the compensation for unrequited love; nor did she believe in the theory of a one and only. If she lost Kenneth, she'd love again. Nor did she believe that his love for her would inspire him to achieve the heights. Her generation bridged the conflict between the Georgian and the late Victorian. "She was a Victorian stone in a Georgian setting."

The Forsyte Saga by John Galsworthy

Among the merchants and bankers of Victorian England, Galsworthy discovered the idea of property extending to absolute ownership of one's wife. Ward contends that Galsworthy's perspective colors his viewpoint.(1) Had the Saga been written in mid-Victorian times, it might have been called "Not so Bad as They Seemed" and A Modern Comedy would have been dubbed "Rather Worse than They Ought to Be". Be that as it may, the author tells us that the Forsytes are members of a supposedly definite English family of that great well-to-do class, the backbone of any nation.

> Bosinney: "How do you tell them?"
> Young Jolyon: "By their sense of property. A Forsyte takes a practical - one might say a common-sense view of things and a practical view of things is based on a sense of property. . . . He knows a good thing, and his grip on property - it doesn't matter whether it be wives, houses, money or reputation - is his hall-mark."

Even Irene is property - a point of view not uncommon in the period, for the Victorians exaggerated the importance of property. Soames was the incarnation of Forsytism, and the English system of divorce afforded Irene no respectable escape from her cage.

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(1) The Nineteen-Twenties, Literature and Ideas in the Post-War Decade, A. C. Ward.

Galsworthy in his Preface supports my theory from Taine of the primitive and secondary imprints, for he says:

> "Discounting for the gigantic stature and blood-thirstiness of old days, as they have come down to us in fairy-tale and legend, the folk of the old Sagas were Forsytes, assuredly, in their possessive instincts, and as little proof against the inroads of beauty and passion as Swithin, Soames, or even Young Jolyon. And if heroic figures in days that never were, seem to startle out from their surroundings in fashion unbecoming to a Forsyte of the Victorian era, we may be sure that tribal instinct was even then the prime force, and that 'family' and the sense of home and property counted as they do to this day, for all the recent efforts to 'talk them out'."

Later he says relative to the "secondary imprint" that men are quite unable to control their own inventions (this was the age of the bicycle, the motor-car, the flying-machine, the cinema), but at best they develop adaptability to the new conditions those inventions create.

In Chapter I of The Man of Property Galsworthy says of the Forsytes: "Through the varying features and expression of those five faces could be marked a certain steadfastness of chin, underlying surface distinctions, marking a racial stamp, too prehistoric to trace, too remote and permanent to discuss - the very hall-mark and guarantee of family fortunes."

He finds the same stamp-less meaningfull, perhaps, but unmistakable, on the younger generation - a sign of something ineradicable in the family soul.

In the family attitude toward Bossiney we note the old tribal instinct. "Like cattle when a dog comes into the field, they stood head to head and shoulder to shoulder, prepared to run upon and trample the invader to death."

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Ownership was the basic principle of class. The Forsytes had shares in all sorts of things; they collected pictures, were supporters of such charitable institutions as might be beneficial to their sick domestics; they were members of the Church of England. To have doubted their Christianity would have caused them pain and surprise. Their pews were paid for as evidence that they were in sympathy with the teachings of Christ.

Although Old Jolyon scoffs at the Forsytes' cold-blooded bargains, he carries his money in a purse, not loose in his pocket. That is an improvement of the next generation.

Typically English in their dread of a scene, Old Jolyon and Young Jolyon after fourteen years meet with a handclasp, a "how are you?", and an offer of a lift. And again in the next generation we find Young Jolyon and Jolly perfect friends who would stand by each other in scrapes but with no need to talk about it.

And the Forsyte dinners - always a saddle of mutton.

"There is something in its succulent solidity which makes it suitable to people 'of a certain position'. It is nourishing and - tasty; the sort of thing a man remembers eating. It has a past and a future, like a deposit paid into a bank; and it is something that can be argued about."

. . . .

"To anyone interested psychologically in Forsytes, this great saddle-of-mutton trait is of prime importance; not only does it illustrate their tenacity, both collectively and as individuals, but it marks them as belonging in fibre and instincts to that great class which believes in nourishment and flavour, and yields to no sentimental craving for beauty."

Younger members of the family would have preferred food with an appeal to the imagination - guinea-fowl or lobster salad - but these had been corrupted by female taste.

To the fact that Irene was not the common Anglo-Saxon woman Galsworthy attributes the trouble between her and Soames. She was

born to love and be loved. To the Forsytes sentiment was a luxury to be indulged only after material cravings had been sated. They believed a wife learned to love her husband because he was her husband. The relations between Soames and his father lacked this same sentiment although they were greatly attached to one another in their Forsytean way. Never did they exchange two words on the more intimate problems of life, nor did they reveal to one another any deep feeling. A Forsyte was nothing if not undemonstrative.

Swithin prided himself on a liberal attitude toward women. He tolerated their painting pictures, writing music, or even books - especially for financial remuneration.

It was left to Old Jolyon, however, to demonstrate the unconscious soundness, balance, and vitality of fibre that made his class the core of the nation.

To Bosinney Young Jolyon gives his lecture on Forsytes.

"They are half England, and the better half, too, the safe half, the three per cent half, the half that counts. It's their wealth and security that makes everything possible; makes your art possible; makes literature, science, even religion, possible. Without Forsytes, who believe in none of these things, but turn them all to use, where should we be? My dear sir, the Forsytes are the middlemen, the commercials, the pillars of society, the corner-stones of convention; everything that is admirable!"

. . . .

". . . . Art, literature, religion, survive by virtue of the few cranks who really believe in such things, and the many Forsytes who make a commercial use of them. At a low estimate, three-fourths of our Royal Academicians are Forsytes, seven-eighths of our novelists, a large proportion of the press. Of science I can't speak; they are magnificently represented in religion, in the House of Commons perhaps more numerous than anywhere; the aristocracy speaks for itself."

Two qualities, Young Jolyon claims, are the test of a Forsyte - the power of never being able to give yourself up to anything soul and body, and the "sense of property." "Look out for their grip", he warns.

"It doesn't do to disregard them!"

As for Irene's rebellion, the real Forsyte population of England gave its sympathy to Soames. He had money; she had beauty. There was no reason why they shouldn't jog along together even if they hated each other. The sanctity of the marriage tie must be respected; breaking up homes was a dangerous experiment. So Winifred Dartie kept Monty because he was the father of her children. Besides a Forsyte refused to share his troubles with the world. To relinquish one's property - that is hard. "Seldom - perhaps never - can they achieve it!"

In Book II In Chancery we find the possessive instinct nascent to the extent that the younger Forsytes are revolting against being owned by their families. Because of a distrust of their earning power and the possession of a knowledge that Forsyte fathers batted to eighty, the younger Forsytes were not so productive. Besides they wanted to enjoy their holidays unhampered.

Young Jolyon like Tom Buddenbrooks(1) looks forward to the continuity of his line - of passing on his house to his son and his son's son. Forsytes, in the terms of Young Jolyon, are people who settle their property that their grandchildren, in case they should die before their parents, have to make wills leaving their property that will only come to themselves when their parents die. Money must be kept in the family. These children of "Superior Dosset" represented Victorian England "with its principles of trade and individualism at five per cent and your money back." They never did a wild thing except Uncle Swithin called "Four-in-hand Forsyte". "Their type was pedestrian."

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(1) Buddenbrooks, Thomas Mann

When Monty returned to Winifred, her heart was full of feeling, but she could give it no expression. She was a Forsyte; she had won a victory; she had retained her property.

In Part III To Let we find other days and other manners. Perhaps it is merely a working out of life in a cycle. Young Jon, son of Jolyon and Irene, turns to the land as "Superior Dosset" had generations before him. It was not really a new age; under slightly different surfaces it was precisely what it had been. Soames valued Annette as a fine possession, an excellent housekeeper, and a sensible, affectionate mother. He found her, however, too frankly cynical about their relations. She had found sentiment in Prosper Profond. To her Soames' attitude was merely English hypocrisy. Forsytism in young Val Dartie ran to his acquisition of a certain strain of horses; even Fleur showed the iron hand of acquisitiveness. This new generation blames the Boer War on their fathers' attitude toward property. They exhibit the same tenacity, the same determination as their forebears, only it does not lean to property. But Soames still had faith in "English common sense" or the power to have things, if not one way then another. And well he might. Did not Holly characterize Fleur's as a "having nature"? Wasn't Fleur tempted to seduce Jon if he could be won no other way? Was she not deterred only by the fact of being a Forsyte? And when her possession is thwarted, does she not strike like Soames even Jon whom she loves by taunting him with being tied to his mother's apron strings? Even Soames says of her that she would "corkscrew her way into a brick wall." Yet Michael, who is no Forsyte, announces calmly to Soames that the possessive instinct is dying out. It has "its shutters up. The house

is to let!"

Very English is Jack Cardigan, Imogen's husband, in his declaration, "I'm English! and I live to be fit." A "sports-machine", Galsworthy dubs him, who would be playing carpet golf in his wife's bedroom when he reached the age of Great-uncle Timothy.

When Jolyon, faced with the ordeal of telling Jon of his past, sees the spirit of Old Jolyon, he hears once again the Victorian Age echoing through time in the insistence that he not Irene must decide. "She's only a woman."

Unable to make money, the fourth generation of Forsytes was going into art, literature, farming, the army, or was just living on the heritage of the third. According to Soames they had no push, no tenacity; they would die out. Was Victorianism buried at Highgate Hill? Was the Forsyte way and age "To Let"? Did a man no longer own his soul, his investments, his woman? Soames, for all his Forsytism, looked on this as an interval of change, to be followed by a reversion. Some one some day would come along and take down the sign. Forsytism was England and must endure.

A Modern Comedy by John Galsworthy

A. C. Ward in The Nineteen-twenties refers to A Modern Comedy as an "elbowing out of Old England by Young England." He says, in effect, that while in the Saga Soames the Victorian was on trial before a jury of the Edwardian generation, in the Comedy the Neo-Georgian generation occupies the dock before the same jury, while Soames the Victorian is now a benevolent old gentleman watching the trial with intense interest. The author seems to be siding with the Victorians although not too pessimistic about the future of Fleur and Marjorie Ferrar.

The War had converted life to comedy. There was nothing to do but laugh at it. Perhaps the transition is best explained by the patient Michael Mont, who says to his partner in the publishing business: "Your generation may like the soft in literature, but you're precious hard in life. Ours won't look at softness in literature, but we're a deuced sight less hard in life."

Even in this generation we find the same unemotionalism. The War did not weaken the possessive instinct in Fleur. Sentimentalism was to her the unforgivable offence. Michael tries in vain to practise the maxim "pity is tripe", but is really too soft-hearted to follow through. Perhaps Fleur's announcement to her husband of her expectations is as coldly English as the doctrine she preaches.

Fleur: "By the way, this is my second no go, Michael; I suppose it means" - - And to Fleur's query: "Do you mind?"

Michael: "Mind? Good God! Mind!"

Fleur: "That's all right then. I don't"

In The Swan Song, Galsworthy says,"No Forsyte talked sex, or liked to hear others talk it; and when they felt its call, they gave no outward sign. Not the Puritan spirit, but a certain refinement in them forbade the subject, and where they got it from they did not know!" Just as matter of fact and simple is their religious code.

Fleur:"What do you think? Be serious!"

Michael: "Well, darling, doctrinally nothing - which means, of course, that I haven't got religion. I believe one has to play the game - but that's ethics."

It is left for Annette, Soames' wife,to express with the

French candor the secret of English success.

"You English are so sloppy. . . . Your slop is your thought and your talk; it is your instinct that gives you your success, and your English instinct is cold and selfish, Soames. You aré a mixture, all of you, of hypocrisy, stupidity, and egoism."

Soames: "Well, and what are the French? Cynical, avaricious, and brutal."

Annette: "You English always wait to see which way the cat jumps".

In The Silver Spoon, Part II of the Comedy, Michael exchanges ideas with Francis Wilmot, who declares that all Americans want out of life is success. Michael admits that the English used to, but are now wondering whether it has not cooked their goose.

Michael: "Idealism is just a by-product of geography and it's the haze that lies in the middle distance. The farther you are from bed-rock, the less quick you need be to see it. We're twenty sea-miles more idealistic about the European situation than the French are. And you're (America) three thousand miles more idealistic than we are."

The novel closes with a true Victorian edict by Soames.

Soames: "The war's left everything very unsettled. I suppose people believe in something nowadays, but I don't know what it is."

Michael: "What do you believe in yourself?"

Soames: "What was good enough for my fathers is good enough for me."

In The Swan Song we find many discussions of religion.

Mrs. Mary Charwell: "Religion used to burn a good many people, Michael, not in cloisters."

Michael: "Quite so, when it emerged from cloisters, religion used to be red-hot politics; then it became caste feeling, and now it's a cross-word puzzle - you don't solve them with your emotions."

Of Soames the author says: "The virus of a time-worn religion which had made the really irreligious old Forsytes say their prayers to the death, in a muddled belief that they would get something after death, still worked inhibitively in the blood of their prayerless offspring, Soames; so that, although fairly certain that he would get nothing after death, he still believed that he would not get everything before death."

B. RUSSIA

Religion

The Russian (and what I state here of the Russian does not include changes brought about by the Soviet government) is one of the most consistently religious persons in the world, for he must have his religion everywhere, "when talking with his children, when sitting in his house, when walking by the way, when going to lie down, and when rising up, written upon the posts of his house, and on the gates".(1) The Russians have a passion for God, and moral law has no lasting and effectual appeal unless prefaced by "God hath said". A Russian's religion is God. To the devout Russian the so-called good things of this life are unsubstantial and swiftly passing experiences, while the great and only realities worth thinking about seriously are those spiritual experiences of the Apostles. Without study or analysis, a Russian finds God's finger in every accident, crime, and intrigue. "Man may walk, but it is God who leads him",(2) is a Russian proverb. Another fundamental trait of a Russian's religion is his deep-rooted faith in destiny. This is a world of human weakness and blind chance. Because of this belief, he seeks after God from the need of a weak man to find some guiding will outside of himself.

Morals

Yet with all this wealth of very real experience, there goes a sad deficiency of moral conduct. Russians resent being accused of

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(1) Russian Life To-day, Herbert Bury

(2) Russian Traits and Terrors, E. B. Lanin

theft when helping themselves to "God's gifts", as they call them, in the shape of fruit and fowls, whereas they would not dream of taking money, clothing, or other material things; or would consider themselves thieves if they did. They draw the distinction between that which God gives for all and that which man produces for himself. Veracity, which has been justly called the vital force of human progress, is precisely the quality in which Russians are most hopelessly deficient. Indeed, in that respect they may be said without exaggeration to outdo the ancient Cretans and put the modern Persians to shame.(1)

General Characteristics

Inquire how many miles you have to walk to the next village. If you look foot-sore and weary, your informant will tell you three or four. Look blithe and gay and put the same question to him five minutes later, and he will answer fifteen. Facts to him are purely subjective, and he arranges them to his capricious taste. A Russian will utter the most damnable lie with a voice trembling with pity and compassion straight from the heart. Turgenev had a habit of inviting friends to dinner and absenting himself when they came, not deliberately but because of the little value he placed upon his pledged word and the faint impression it used to make on his mind. A Russian face defies the skill of expert physiognomists.

Home Life

The Talmud teaches that hospitality is the pith and marrow of divine worship. If this be true, then the Russians may claim to be a pre-eminently religious people; for there is no other European, and perhaps no inhabitant of any other country of the globe, who will more cheerfully share his last loaf with the hungry stranger (2) Ungrudging, genial hospitality suggestive of that which characterized the contemporaries

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(1) Lanin - op. cit.

(2) Lanin - op. cit.

of Abraham, is a marked feature of all classes.

The Russian woman looks forward to an early marriage, a marriage arranged usually by an intermediary, to a home, a husband, children, and a domestic life of "drawn thread" work and embroidered linens. Nineteen is a dreadful age for an unmarried girl, for she feels herself already an old maid and is disinclined to tell her age. Yet for all the early marriage, the housewifely future, the domesticity, there is a Russian proverb that says: "If you do not wish to spoil your appetite, don't look into the kitchen".

General Characteristics

Of all nations Russia feels most kindly toward England and loves to learn from the English. This is all the more interesting in view of the wide difference in heritage, in environment, and in general characteristics. In the melancholy, mystic, generous, loyal, patient, superstitious, and yet tender Russian, we find a nature richly endowed: a keen, subtle understanding, a remarkable quickness of apprehension; a sweet, forgiving temper; an inexhaustible flow of animal spirits; a rude, persuasive eloquence; topped by an imitative faculty positively simian in range and intensity. Nor do Russians ever tire of waiting. The most characteristic thing in Russia is waiting: waiting hours for your ticket at the booking office, waiting for your money at the bank, waiting for a turn to buy a seat for next week's performance at the theatre, waiting whole days if Chaliapin is going to sing. It is this mystical and unpractical Russian that is spiritually interesting to England - this mystical, suffering, melancholy Russian of two souls: "one, derived from the wandering Mongol, is that of the dreamer, mystic, idler, believer in fate; the other is the soul of the Slav, which could

burn up bravely and clearly, but cannot because of the other".(1)

Russian Literature of the 19th Century

The serious character of Russian fiction is due to the development of Russian literature under a despotism that forbade or at least hampered open discussion of public questions. Political, social, or religious questions could not be discussed in press, or in forum, but in a novel a writer could at least indicate his point of view. For this reason, "hardly any literature equals the Russian in reproducing the spiritual struggles of men." (2) Literature was the only refuge of the Russian mind, the only safety valve to avoid stagnation. For this reason the Russian novelist performs a civic service. He is not supposed to tell a story for the story's sake. He writes as a friend, a teacher, a leader. His literature may give joy, suffering, or rapture, but not pleasure. He must touch upon the most important moments in the life of the individual as well as in the life of society or humanity. He must picture social injustices, ideals of family life, of a better social order. He must acquaint the Russian with his fatherland. So the Russian reader will gratify his social instincts by reading descriptions of people's lives; he will gratify his desire for politics and political action in the literary discussions of capitalists, socialists, and nihilists. Thus Russian novels have a background of politics, of psychology, of mental strife, of philosophy. But always the Russians are vague. Government censorship has strengthened the innate tendency to vagueness. "When ten Englishmen meet", says Turgenev in Smoke, "they talk about the tax on paper, the submarine telegraph, or methods of tanning rat skins;" when ten Russians meet, they discuss the significance, the future of Russia, always on the vague and indefinite.

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(1) Russian in 1916, Stephen Graham

(2) A Guide to Russian Literature, Moissaye J. Olgin

Fathers and Children by Ivan Turgenev

Turgenev, in his novels, portrays the intellectual middle class, the small landed proprietors of two generations. The young man of this class from too rapid an intellectual growth plunges into nihilism. He is often well educated, melancholy, rich in ideas but poor in executive ability, always preparing and expecting to accomplish something of importance, filled with vague and generous projects for the public good. Turgenev preaches no doctrine in his novels, has no remedy for the universe, but he sees clearly certain weaknesses of the Russian character and exposes these with absolute candor.

In Fathers and Children the characters discuss authors, French and English, marriage, the equality of man, what is individuality, and what is nihilism. The novel is an exposure of our power to mould our own lives. Nikolai Petrovitch and his brother Pavel are types of ineffective Russian nobility, who gain our affections either by a timid gentleness or by a chivalric refinement of nature. In Bazarov we find a representative of the younger generation, who boldly casts aside all political, social, and religious traditions, and, a skeptic to the core, devotes himself to science as the key to all truth.

As evidence of Russian ineffectualness and of the Russian admiration for England and the English, may I quote Bazarov. "In my room there's an English washstand, but the door won't fasten. Anyway that ought to be encouraged - an English washstand stands for progress!" À propos of the same characteristic, Pavel tells Bazarov, "English aristocracy do not abate one iota of their rights, and for that reason they respect the rights of others; they demand the performance of what is due them, and for that reason they perform their own duties. The

aristocracy has given freedom to England, and maintains it for her."

Of nihilism, Nikolai Petrovitch says, "A nihilist, that's from the Latin, nihil, nothing, as far as I can judge; the word must mean a man who accepts nothing."

"Say, 'who respects nothing'," put in Paul Petrovitch. "A nihilist is a man who does not bow down before any authority, who does not take any principle on faith, whatever reverence that principle may be enshrined in," contributes Arkady, Nikolai's son.

A House of Gentlefolk, by Ivan Turgenev

Lavretsky in A House of Gentlefolk is a truly Russian type; gentle and sweet of disposition, possessing small vital force, and sinking into oblivion without gaining outward triumph. He was brought up in an atmosphere of bookish dreams, sincerity, and simple kindliness. As a result, he grows up unworldly but emotionally sound. When disaster overtakes Lavretsky and his love Lisa, they are resigned. Moral law is more potent than supreme passion.

In typical Russian fashion Lavretsky is frequently given to moralizing. "To be young and to fail is bearable; but to be old and not be successful is hard to bear." Again he muses upon happiness and designates it a "luxury, an undeserved bliss, if it even comes once to a man. Look around and see", he adds, "who is happy, who enjoys life about you."

In fact, William Allen Neilson says of the Russian novel, that the favorite hero of young girls and romantic women is neither the brilliant officer, artist nor rich lord, but the provincial Hamlet, conscientious, cultivated, intelligent, but of feeble will, full of scientific theories about the improvement of mankind and the good of

the lower classes, and eager to apply these theories on his own estate. Of the Russian heroine, Mr. Neilson says that she is conscientious, frank, and affectionate, without being romantic. She is less intelligent than the man but more resolute. The irresolute Russian man is guided by the woman of strong will.(1)

Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoi

Anna Karenina is a story of love, life, and death. It portrays the thinking elements of Russian nobility and offers a colorful panorama of the upper class in Russia in the later nineteenth century groping for a solution to the meaning of life.

Again in Anna Karenina we have the Hamletian hero, for the laurels fall not to the vigorous officer Vronsky, nor to the cold politician Karenin, both of whom win success, but to the clumsy farmer, Levin, with his kindly obstinate search for a moral ideal to guide him through life. Levin loves his farm and his family. He is happier in the respect paid to him by neighbors and peasant laborers. His real triumph is in the broadening and deepening of his true moral ideals and ethical philosophy by which he guides his life.

In Stepan Oblonsky we find the ineffectual Russian reading a liberal paper, not an extreme one, but one advocating the views held by the majority.

> "And in spite of the fact that science, art, and politics had no special interest for him, he firmly held those views on all these subjects which were held by the majority and by his paper, and he only changed them when the majority changed them, or, more strictly speaking, he did not change them, for they imperceptibly changed of themselves within him."

When Levin resigned from the district council, his brother Sergey protested:

"That's how it always is! We Russians are always like that.

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(1) Introduction to Fathers and Children (Harvard Classics)

Perhaps it's our strong point really, the faculty of seeing our own short comings, but we overdo it, we comfort ourselves with irony which we always have on the tip of our tongues. All I say is, give us such rights as our local self-government to any other European people - why, the Germans or the English would have worked their way to freedom from them, while we simply turn them into ridicule."

How much the product of his heritage is Vronsky as at times he meditates that while in his heart he did not respect his mother, and without acknowledging it to himself he did not love her, nevertheless in accord with the ideas of the set in which he lived, and with his own education, he could not have conceived of any behavior to his mother not in the highest degree respectful and obedient, and the more externally obedient and respectful his behavior, the less in his heart he respected and loved her.

Throughout many of the Russian novels there is a prevalent sensitiveness to sex as such. I quote from Anna Karenina."Betsy with a shrug of her shoulders twitched down the bodice of her gown that had worked up, so as to be duly naked as she moved forward towards the footlights into the light of the gas, and the sight of all eyes." Again, Levin was embarrassed because his sister-in-law "was sitting opposite to him, in a dress, specially put on, as he fancied, for his benefit, cut particularly open, in the shape of a trapeze, on her white bosom. This quadrangular opening, in spite of the bosom's being very white, or just because it was very white, deprived Levin of the full use of his faculties." Varenka claimed it was only in Russia that men of fifty thought themselves old, and that in France a man of fifty considered himself "dans la force de l'âge"while a man of forty was a "jeune homme".

Tolstoi never fails to note that his male characters are attracted by the physical. "Catching sight of the yellow shoulders of

Lidia Ivanovna jutting out above her corset, and her fine pensive eyes bidding him to her, Alexey Alexandrovitch smiled and went towards her."

Youth seems to be youth in all languages and climes, for Kitty is glad that Levin proposes even if she does not intend to accept him. Girls of her age formed some sort of clubs, went to some sort of lectures, mixed freely in men's society, drove about the streets alone, and most important of all - they were firmly convinced that to choose their husband was their own affair and not that of their parents. The French fashion of parents' arranging marriages they condemned; the English fashion of complete independence of girls was not possible in Russian society; but the Russian fashion of an intermediary matchmaker they frowned upon.

From Lvov's wife comes the protest of the middle generation against changing customs. "When we were brought up there was one extreme - we were kept in the basement, while our parents lived in the best rooms; now it is just the other way - the parents are in the wash-house, while the children are in the best rooms. Parents now are not expected to live at all but to exist altogether for their children."

Like Arina Vlasyevna in Fathers and Children, who is a genuine Russian gentlewoman, very devout and emotional, a believer in omens, dreams, and fortune-telling; Anna Karenina is sure that the death of the drunk guard of the train on which she met Vronsky is an omen of evil portent.

War and Peace by Leo Tolstoi

War and Peace is a vast chronicle of the fortunes of five families and gives an artistic biography of men and women during seven years of the nineteenth century. In vastness and scope this novel most truly resembles The Forsyte Saga of John Galsworthy in that the several families presented live their lives more or less inter-related and dominated

by a background historically and socially national. Even the hero, Prince Andrey Bolkonsky is a hero more in the English sense than in the Russian. Andrey's intense admiration for the English and his contempt for other nations is found in his character analysis of Pfuhl whom he designates as

> "one of those hopelessly, immutably conceited men, ready to face martyrdom for their own ideas, conceited as only Germans can be, just because it is only a German's conceit that is based on an abstract idea - science, that is, the supposed possession of absolute truth. The Frenchman is conceited from supposing himself mentally and physically to be inordinately fascinating both to men and to women. An Englishman is conceited on the ground of being a citizen of the best constituted state in the world, and also because he as an Englishman always knows what is the correct thing to do and knows that everything that he, as an Englishman, does is indisputably the correct thing. . . . A Russian is conceited precisely because he knows nothing and cares to know nothing since he does not believe it possible to know anything fully. A conceited German" he concludes, "is the worst of them all, and the most hardened of all; for he imagines that he possesses the truth in a science of his own invention, which is to him absolute truth."

War and Peace is intrinsically Russian. Like the odor of incense is the religious atmosphere that pervades the book. Ceremonies of blessed ikons, holy images, holy pictures, are observed before all battles, before all religious feasts, name days, or family celebrations of any kind. Yet the Russian fate drips from the pen of Tolstoi as he writes, "Every action of theirs (great men in history), that seems to them an act of their own free-will, is in an historical sense not free at all, but in bondage to the whole course of previous history, and predestined from all eternity." Yet even in the midst of the religious ceremony of the christening of the young prince, Nikolay Andreitch, there is displayed the ironic weakness of Prince Andrey's superstitious delight in the nurse's announcement that a bit of wax with the baby's hairs in it thrown into the font floated - a good sign. Sonya, too, is superstitious enough to advocate that young girls try their fates in a

granary. They are advised to go and listen. If there is a knocking and a tapping, it is bad; but if there is a sound of sifting corn, it is good. The countess, too, is not above this Russian weakness, for when assured by the doctor that Natasha is much better, she looks at her finger nails and spits in order to avert the ill-omen of such confident words.

The sex of the realists plays its part here, too. An instance is found in the description of Ellen wearing a dress "very low in the neck in front and behind. Her bust, which had always to Pierre looked like marble, was so close to his short-sighted eyes that he could discern all the living charm of her neck and shoulders. . . . He felt the warmth of her body, the fragrance of her scent, and heard the creaking of her corset as she moved."

Pierre himself suffered from an unlucky faculty common to many men, especially Russians -

> "the faculty of seeing and believing in the possibility of good and truth, and at the same time seeing too clearly the evil and falsity of life to be capable of taking a serious part in it. Every sphere of activity was in his eyes connected with evil and deception. Whatever he tried to be, whatever he took up, evil and falsity drove him back again and cut him off from every field of energy."

The Russian ineffectualness had made him its own in that he had learned, "not through his intellect but through his whole being, through life that man is created for happiness, that happiness lies in himself, in the satisfaction of his natural, human cravings; that all unhappiness is due, not to lack of what is needful, but to superfluity."

The Brothers Karamazov
by
Féodor Dostoievsky

In the tempestuous novel, The Brothers Karamazov, Dostoievsky is presenting a psychological vivisection of human souls. Amidst the pages of cruelty, filth, vice, crime, treachery, torment, and suffering, we find a struggle of heroic will against the elemental power of moral duty and conscience; a struggle against the power of people, state, political influence, and metaphysical and religious mysteries. The foreign reader may well be impressed by the moral earnestness, for the characters here, Ivan, Alyosha, and Dmitri, are no mere puppets but aspiring individuals battling moral forces in their struggle against heritage and prejudice that seem to have fore-doomed them to tragedy.

Of the three brothers Dmitri, perhaps, is the most intensely Russian in his spontaneous mingling of good and evil, in his love of culture and Schiller mingled with tavern brawls and sadistic orgies. His love for Grushenka is earthy. Hers was a Russian beauty, with a passionate appeal to men, a beauty of the moment, fleeting, physical, so often met with in Russian women.

Ivan, the second brother, drowns his heritage in an intellectualism that seeks an answer to his continual problems in politics, ethics, and religion. "The whole natural law lies in faith, " he decides, and if you were to destroy in mankind the belief in immortality, not only love but every living force maintaining the life of the world would at once be dried up. Moreover, nothing would be immoral, everything would be lawful, even cannibalism. "There is no virtue if there is no immortality." In his many arguments with Alyosha may be found Dostoievsky's own beliefs, for young Russia talks always of eternal questions.

"Those who do not believe in God", says Ivan, "talk of socialism

or anarchism, of the transformation of all humanity on a new pattern, so that it all comes to the same, they're the same questions turned inside out. And masses, masses of the most original Russian boys do nothing but talk of the eternal questions! Isn't it so?"

And Alyosha answers, "Yes, for real Russia the questions of God's existence and of immortality, or, as you say, the same questions turned inside out, come first and foremost, of course, and so they should."

> Ivan: "I won't go through all the axioms laid down by Russian boys on that subject (God and creation), all derived from European hypotheses, for what's a hypothesis there, is an axiom with the Russian boy, and not only with the boys but with their teachers too, for our Russian professors are often just the same boys themselves."

Alyosha confirms the conceit of Russian ignorance voiced by Prince Andrey (War and Peace) when he says,

> "Not long ago I read a criticism made by a German who lived in Russia, on our students and schoolboys of to-day. 'Show a Russian schoolboy', he writes, 'a map of the stars, which he knows nothing about, and he will give you back the map the next day with corrections on it.' No knowledge and unbounded conceit - that's what the German meant to say about the Russian schoolboy."

As an example of Russian dishonesty to no purpose we find Gorstkin who tells lies while you wonder why he is doing it. He tells you his wife is dead and he has married another, while the truth of the matter is that his wife is still living and beats him twice a week. In Father Zossima's biographical notes the Father writes that all the boys in the regiment were willing to lay down their lives for the honor of the regiment, yet none knew the real meaning of honor.

Ivan's skepticism is a distinct outgrowth of his intellectual rebellion against his heritage. "Our historical pastime", he claims, "is the direct satisfaction of inflicting pain. There are lines in Nekrassov describing how a peasant lashes a horse on the eyes. . . . It's

peculiarly Russian. . . . The Tartars taught us. They left us the knout as a remembrance of it."

At the trial of Dmitri for the murder of his father, the prosecutor, Ippolit Kirillovitch says:

> "We are so accustomed to such crimes. . . . What are the causes of our indifference, our lukewarm attitude to such deeds, to such signs of the times, ominous of an unenviable future? Is it our cynicism, is it the premature exhaustion of intellect and imagination in a society that is sinking into decay, in spite of its youth? Is it that our moral principles are shattered to their foundations, or is it, perhaps, a complete lack of principles among us? . . . . Look how our young people commit suicide, without asking themselves Hamlet's question what there is beyond."

Yet through the murky background of the novel there seeps Alyosha's idealism, and we conclude that for the Russian, God will save Russia.

C. GERMANY

Introduction

In the course of my research on Germany, her customs, her people, and her literature, I have been handicapped on all sides. I have consulted available material but have been forced to discard much. Books on Germany written during the years of 1914-1920 obviously exhibit such rank bias that I have disregarded their information as too prejudiced to be of any value in a thesis.

Religion

The narrow dogmatic zealots who confound religion with church-going, would be likely to criticize the German severely. Although the scrupulously regular churchgoer is not less common in Germany than in England,(1) you will meet a multitude of the most excellent people, of pure and faultless life, even of deeply religious character, who very

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(1) German Life in Town and Country, Wm. H. Dawson

rarely go to church. In Germany religion is a matter more of the intellect than the heart; hence it is less regarded as a personal matter, and the religious instinct is far less egotistic. The Englishman professes religion more, yet without being more really religious. (1) Above all he treats religion with a freedom and a familiarity which shock the German of good taste. To the latter, religion is surrounded by more dignity; it never becomes a commonplace thing; rather it is viewed as something distant, outside and above him; "it is a sacred table of the law, to be enshrined in a suitable casing of formality and solemnity, and not to be dragged profanely into the ordinary haunts of life." (2) "We decorously keep our religion always on the shelf," say the Germans to the English. "You take yours down every day and handle it without respect."

Festivals of the church year, however, still maintain a strong hold among all classes alike. In no other country do these festivals more partake of the character of national observances; and many a man who professes to have shaken himself loose from ecclesiastical associations unconsciously pays homage to the church and the religion he disdains by the heartiness with which he keeps up some, at least, of the commemorations of the church's calendar. Emphatically the national festival of the year is Christmas. The holiday lasts three days, and throughout the land work is suspended by universal consent while Germans young and old throw themselves enthusiastically into the enjoyment of the Fröliche Weinachzeit. Even in cemeteries and churchyards you will see miniature Christmas trees rising from the snow, in token that the dead are not forgotten during this time of festivity.

Morals

The old German proverb, "Thue recht und scheue Niemand!"

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(1) Dawson, op. cit.

(2) Dawson, op. cit.

("Do right and fear nobody!") is an unconscious revelation that behind the cultured German's profession of skepticism there is generally a spirit of profound reverence for things religious. It is just such an inherent Carlylean conception of religion that makes the Germans such a truly moral people.

Home Life

This practical morality is evidenced most plainly in the family group, which is the core of German activity. In the words of the German proverb, "The house is woman's world; the world is man's house." Marriage in Germany may often fall short of the American ideal of companionship, but as far as fidelity and devotion go, the German husband is as good as any other. Over and over again, says Mrs. Alfred Sidgwick (1) German women express an envy of the wives of Englishmen, while English women in Germany surely feel a loss of caste. In Germany one is "nothing at all" because one is a woman: to be treated with gallantry if one is young and pretty, and as a negligible quantity if otherwise. "The men of the race still have the whip hand as much as is good for them in England; a little more than is good for them in Germany."(2) If you go to Germany, you must not expect a man to open a door for you, or to wait on you at afternoon tea, or to carry a parcel for you in the street. He will kiss your hand when he greets you, address you as gnädige Frau or gnädiges Fräulein, he will snap his heels together and make you military bows, he will pay compliments that smack of artificiality; or he may omit the kisses, the bows, and the compliments, and be quite undisguisedly bearish; or he may be something betwixt and between, kindly concerned for your pleasure and welfare. But whatever he is, he will never forget for one moment that you are "only a woman". If you marry him, he

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(1) Home Life in Germany, A. Sidgwick

(2) Sidgwick, op. cit.

will expect to rule everywhere except in the kitchen. On occasion he will even assert his authority with some violence and naîveté.

A military marriage is the dream of every girl of social aspirations, but is a dream that can be realized only when her rank is of sufficient quality and her dowry of more than ordinary size. (1) French parents consider marriage the proper career for a woman, and with corresponding logic set themselves from the day of a girl's birth to provide a dowry for her. When she is of marriageable age, they likewise provide a husband. They make great sacrifices to establish a daughter in prosperity and leave nothing to chance. The English leave everything to chance, and the idea of a marriage made by bargain and without love is offensive. On the whole, the English girl shifts for herself. If she marries, well and good; if she remains single, well and good, too, provided she can earn her living or has private resources. When she has neither and fails to marry, however, she is superfluous.(2) Before proposing marriage, a German man must be well established and have something substantial to offer his future bride. Hence there is great disparity in ages of husband and wife.

Enlightening, too, are the engagement photographs always made sometime before the marriage. Anyone who peers inside a German family album will note that the lady is nearly always standing, while her lover is seated.

"Das Recht des Kindes" is a post-war cry in Germany. Up to that time the elders still had rights and privileges. A child's time belongs to her parents is (or was) a German precept.

Because of the frequent disparity in ages and tastes of German

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(1) Dawson, op. cit.

(2) Sidgwick, op. cit.

couples, the German girl, who in the course of time takes upon herself domestic responsibilities, has to contend with influences which are in general opposed to zeal for study. Naturally well-endowed, however, her desire lies dormant only to feed upon what spare moments she can find. To her books she instinctively retires in her leisure as a man resorts to his pipe, his slippers, and his newspaper.

Education

There are no people in the world who set so high a value on knowledge. Germans claim that English universities exist to turn out gentlemen rather than scholars; their own universities aim to encourage learning. An Englishman would reply that a gentleman is bred at home, but since the German thinks only of Oxford and Cambridge, he is speaking roughly of the Englishmen of comparatively good social standing. From the secondary school to the university is a natural step in Germany; far more so than in England. In few countries in the world is the door of educational advancement so wide open as in Germany.

Books, music, and the theater all hold a serious place in German national life. In no other country is there so much singing of songs, patriotic, popular, military, and academic. Everyone sings when he can. Perhaps nowhere else are concerts so classical in character. The theater, too, is viewed from an educational standpoint. On Sunday afternoons all through the winter the play-houses are crowded with people who can not pay week-day prices, and yet like and are intelligent enough to enjoy a fairly good performance of Hamlet or Egmont; who are musical enough to choose a Mozart opera, or who are interested in the problems of life as presented by Ibsen, Gorky, Tolstoi, or Hauptmann. You still find Byron in every household where English is read at all. Ruskin

and Oscar Wilde vie with F. Marion Crawford for popularity.

General Characteristics

While there is no German who is not proud, even to a certain degree of vanity, of his country's pre-war ascent in the political scale, there are many Germans who are out of sympathy with material aims and successes of all kinds. The dollar is not almightly there. Trained in the school of idealists, they prefer to live in the poetry and music of the past and would barter the gold marks of their millionaires for the brain of another Richte, would trade all their manufactories and workshops for one more drama by Schiller; or would renounce their mastery in science for the soul of another Schubert. It is, indeed, gratifying to find in a country so strong a counter-balance of idealism and commercialism, a country of Krupps and of Heines; of Einsteins and of Hauptmanns, where the Sturm und Drang of much-vaunted German militarism can translate itself into Wagnerian Parsifals or wax romantic in Deutsches Liebeslieds.

German Literature of 19th Century

While possessing one of the grandest and richest of literatures during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it must be confessed by an unprejudiced student that Germany has not in modern days (the latter nineteenth century) been so fortunate as England or France in the field of the novel. After scanning innumerable histories of German literature, I found the nineteenth century to have been productive of lesser poetry and greater drama, with only a few noteworthy novels. This situation increased the difficulty of my already intricate problem. There was during this period an output by minor novelists of the "like-mother-used-to-make" type from which Americans have gleaned their supposed knowledge of the German Gretchen or Marguerita.

"Externally she consists mainly of a pair of soulful blue eyes,

a brace of uncommonly flaxen tresses, a sweet smile, and a Gretchen bag. Her intellectual horizon is marked out by her accomplishments. She reads and recites Schiller and the expurgated Heine - over her fine embroidery; she sings and plays - Schubert, Mendelssohn, and a family sort of Schumann. . . . She is the famed angelic maid, the clinging damsel without a backbone whom, according to Helene Böhlan, the German loves so dearly. . . . Yet in fairness to the Germans it must be said that women of a taller mental stature and a larger temperamental gamut have long ere yesterday stepped in front of this anemic doll and cast eclipse upon her." (1)

These strictly feminine novels I have discarded as not typical. Modern German literature, however, does not glorify family life as did that of the nineteenth century. The post-war novel reeks with the bitterness of a heritage sold for a mess of potage. In the place of pre-war Germany there has sprung up a generation disillusioned and thwarted - yet time moves in cycles.

Effi Briest by Theodor Fontane

Although the nineteenth century gave to Germany no great novelists, the later work of Theodor Fontane is worthy of investigation because he aimed to present with unfailing accuracy life in Berlin. He concerned himself with little less than the personal relationship of one human being to another. Frequently his stories are based on the triangular theme which, after all, because of the disparity in ages of husband and wife can well be understood. His first Berlin novel L'Adultera smacks of the Anna Karenina plot. For close examination I have chosen Effi Briest, his masterpiece. Here again, Fontane attacks the triangle. Effi as a mere child is called from her play to meet her prospective husband, Baron Instetten, aged thirty-eight, a former suitor of her mother. As she goes, she hears her playmates calling her. In this unanswered call of her childhood lies the pathos of the book. Instetten becomes "Landrat" and in his over-conscientious devotion to duty leaves Effi much to herself. With Major Crampas, new commandant of

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(1) Studies in Modern German Literature, Otto Heller

the local militia, she finds a congenial companionship which is rudely interrupted by a duel between her husband and the major ending in the death of the latter. Divorce and disgrace follow. The story resembles closely Flaubert's Madame Bovary. Effi's father sides with her husband in his German view of the rights of the male. He maintains that every man annoys his wife. If his son-in-law decides to take a wedding tour and use it for making new catalogues of every gallery he sees, you can't keep him from doing so. "That is what it means to get married." Effi is not intentionally untrue to her husband; she is merely the victim of the German uncongeniality in marriage plus opportunity and insufficient family cares. Not always does this disparity in ages result in the triangle. That is merely the problem as presented by Fontane.

Buddenbrooks by Thomas Mann

In Buddenbrooks, by Thomas Mann, a master of the novel, we have one of the outstanding achievements of the new century. "It is a novel built four-square, one may say, with a breadth and solidity which reminds one of the great Russians." (1) Mann presents here a graphic, truthful, detailed account of the decline of a Lübeck patrician family. The scope of the novel resembles in outline The Forsyte Saga of John Galsworthy beginning with Johann Buddenbrook who fathers the family much as Superior Dosset in the Saga. Like the Saga Buddenbrooks smacks of family, of class, and of property.

By established custom, on Thursdays of every second week, all Buddenbrooks living in town assembled. "A family should be united, Father," said Jean to Johann. "It must keep together." There they used to sit around the table under the calmly smiling gaze of the Buddenbrook immortals on the wall. It was strange to see how Madame Antoinette

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(1) The Modern German Novel, Harvey W. Hewett-Thayer

Buddenbrook had grown to look like her husband.

Morning and evening the immediate family gathered in the diningroom for prayers, while the servants had theirs in the hall. Frau Consul Buddenbrook or Clara read chapters from the family Bible. Then they sang a few verses from a hymn-book accompanied by Frau Consul on the organ. "Or often in place of the chapter from the Bible, they had a reading from one of those edifying or devotional books with the black binding and gilt edges - those *Little Treasures*, *Jewel Caskets*, *Holy Hours*, *Morning Chimes*, *Pilgrims' Staffs*, and the like, whose common trait was a sickly and languishing tenderness for the little Jesus."

Here we find none of the stained glass, pealing organ religion of the Russian; only a solid every day variety like the "Jerusalem evenings" founded by Frau Consul Buddenbrook when once a week some twenty ladies all of an age when it is profitable to begin to consider one's heavenly future foregathered about the dining-room table to drink tea, eat delicate sandwiches, read hymns and sermons aloud to each other, and do embroidery to be sold at a yearly bazaar, the proceeds of which were sent to a mission in Jerusalem. This pious society, however, was drawn mostly from ladies of the Frau Consul's own rank, for rank in German society seems very important. Out of respect for the fact that Jesus himself showed no such discrimination, however, a few oddities were admitted. The religion, nevertheless, stays always within the realm of common understanding. When the Frau Consul, ashamed of the clothes worn by the Gerhardt twins, tells them, "God sees the heart, I know; but your clothes are really a *little* - one must take some thought for oneself; "Tony admonishes that all those

who wear a long coat and say, "Lord, Lord," are not entirely without blemish.

When the Syrian and Arabian missionary challenged Tony to assert that the curls on her forehead were consistent with true Christian humility, she replied, "May I ask you, Herr Pastor, to concern yourself with your own curls?" The Herr Pastor was bald.

Marriage is, of course, a German family problem in which the dowry plays an important part. Clothilde Buddenbrook, cousin of Tony, had not a sou; therefore she knew she would find nobody to marry her, and looked with humility into her future, which would surely consist of consuming a tiny income in some tiny room which her influential uncle would procure for her out of the funds of some charity established for maidens of good family. Tony, on the other hand, prayed to make a match "worthy of our name". And in answer to Tony's prayers may I quote the practical decision of her parents.

> "He is no beau, God knows, But he is perfectly presentable. One mustn't ask for five legs on a sheep, as we say in business. If she waits for somebody to come along who is an Adonis and a good match to boot - well, God bless us, Tony Buddenbrook could always find a husband, but it's a risk, after all. Every day is fishing-day, but not every day is catching-day, to use another homely phrase".

And after the marriage, the whole philosophy of the German attitude may be summed up in this conversation between the Consul and his wife.

Frau Consul: "Do you think she is happy with him?"

Herr Consul: "She is satisfied with herself, which is better; it is the most solid happiness we can have on this earth."

Even Tom, the romantic Buddenbrook, says upon parting from his love Anna, "If I live I shall take over the business and make a good

match - you see I am open with you at parting, Anna." And when the "good match" with Gerda Arnoldsen is assured, Tom says to his mother, "I simply will not delve deep down enough in myself to find out how much the thought of the dowry, which was whispered into my ear that first evening, contributed to my feeling. I love her: but it crowns my happiness and pride to think that when she becomes mine, our firm will at the same time gain a very considerable increase of capital." When this same Tom, upon the death of the Consul, is reproved by his mother for lack of respect and duty due her, he answers in true German fashion, "My dear Mother, I have never for a moment forgotten the respect I owe you, but my attributes as a son became void when I took my father's place as head of the family and of the firm."

Taught by the motto of old Johann Buddenbrook, whose son Johann founded the firm, and whose picture together with those of Consul Johann Buddenbrook and Thomas Buddenbrook hung in the office, the advice which warned, "My son, attend with zeal, to thy business by day; but do none that hinders thee from thy sleep at night," the Buddenbrooks placed first in education duty to the family, which meant the House of Buddenbrook. "We have trade schools and technical schools and commercial schools springing up on every corner," complained the Elder Buddenbrook. "The high schools and the classical education suddenly turn out to be mines and factories and making money." Yet he objected to the perpetual occupation of young heads with Greek and Latin. More important subjects were necessary, such as preparation for the practical affairs of life. In the old days, the classical course had been thought of as an end in itself, to be pursued at one's ease, with a sense of duty, power, service,

and the career.

In a letter to Thomas the Consul wrote:

"I have still to mention a letter from Herr van der Kellen, from which I was pleased to learn that you are a favored guest in his family circle. You are now, my son, at an age to begin to harvest the fruits of the up-bringing your parents gave you. It may be helpful to you if I tell you that at your age, both in Antwerp and Bergen, I formed a habit of making myself useful and agreeable to my principals; and this was of greatest service to me. Aside from the honour of association with the family of the head of the firm, one acquires an advocate in the person of the principal's wife; and she may prove invaluable in the undesirable contingency of an oversight at the office or the dissatisfaction of your chief for some slight cause or other."

The letter closed with the Rotarian slogan, "Work, pray, and save."

Calm, cool Machiavellianism in business rather than in statesmanship.

Nowhere do you find the ecstatic joy or despondent melancholy of the impassioned Russian. The German graph of life runs on a fairly even line. Happiness except that realized from duty or from business plays a minor rôle here. "We are not born," writes the Consul to his daughter Tony, "for that which, with our short-sighted vision, we reckon to be our own small personal happiness. We are not free, separate, and independent entities, but like links in a chain." And Tony, having given up all idea of Morten who, as a member of the bourgeoisie, recognized that Tony was beyond his reach, poor Tony remembered that she was a link in a chain, to share by deed and word in the history of her family.

Yet these practical solid men of action occasionally gave evidence that they had not escaped the heritage of sentiment from the Deutsche Minnesingers, for even the hard-boiled Consul would drop quotations from Heine and other poets while in the midst of business or civic affairs. As for Tom - when Uncle Gotthold died,

"You haven't had a very good time, Uncle Gotthold," he mused. "You learned too late to make concessions and show consideration. But that is what one has to do. If I had been like you, I should have married a shop girl years ago. But for the sake of appearances - ! I wonder if you really wanted anything different? You were proud, and probably felt that your pride was something idealistic, but your spirit had little power to rise. To cherish the vision of an abstract good; to carry in your heart, like a hidden love, only far sweeter, the dream of preserving an ancient name, an old family, an old business, of carrying it on, and adding to it more and more honour and lustre - ah, that takes imagination, Uncle Gotthold, and imagination you didn't have. The sense of poetry escaped you. . . . We are travelled and educated enough to realize that the limits set to our ambition are small and petty enough, looked at from outside and above. But everything in this world is comparative, Uncle Gotthold. Did you know one can be a great man, even in a small place; a Caesar even in a little commercial town on the Baltic? But that takes imagination and idealism - and you didn't have it, whatever you may have thought yourself."

It is in moments like these, that we forgive Tom his Buddenbrooks' practicality and egoism, egoism that intrudes itself even into his religion. The comfortable superficiality of old Johann could not satisfy his metaphysical and spiritual needs, and he ended by finding in evolution the answer to all his questions about eternity and immortality. He said to himself that he had lived in his forbears and would live on in his descendants. And this line which he had taken coincided not only with his sense of family, his patrician self-consciousness, his ancestor-worship, as it were; but it had also strengthened his ambitions and through them the whole course of his existence. "I shall live - This is the revelation: that I shall live! . . . . Where shall I be when I am dead? . . . . I shall be in all those who have ever, do ever, or ever shall say 'I'."

Like Soames Forsyte Tom wants a new house that will more fully do justice to the Buddenbrook station. His pleasure fades a bit, however, before Tony's stand. The ancestral home had been going to pieces for years. A family of cats was living rent-free in the

billiard-room, and you could not walk there for fear of going through the thin floor boards. Yet Tony recalled the Buddenbrook house-warming with the entire family present when Uncle Hoffstede read a poem entitled "Venus Anadyomene". And now strange people would walk the halls. But Tom countered with the argument that everything has its time, and doubtless the people from whom Grandfather bought the house had felt exactly the same.

Tom wants little Johann to be a Buddenbrook, practical-minded with definite impulses for power and conquest, but Johann is the child of Gerda as well, whose love of Beethoven, Bach, and Wagner cannot be sublimated in big business. And Gerda explains to Herr Pfühl to whom she takes the child for music lessons that it matters so little whether one is trained upon an instrument, and so much whether one knows something about music. Fortunately, Johann does not live to inherit the house of Buddenbrook, and is spared the fight between the commercial and the romantic ideal.

The World's
Illusion
by
Jakob
Wassermann

Jakob Wassermann is one of those Germans who even in the midst of the din of battle did not forget their dreams. One of these dreams he has painted for us in The World's Illusion, a cycloramic canvas depicting European society in pre-war days, a picture of prodigious size and infinite variety. "To keep contact with and faith in humanity," says Wassermann, "during the last years of the War I wrote The World's Illusion," which pictures every phase of contemporary society, from highest to lowest; its disruption and decay. Christian Wahnschaffe, one of the central figures in the novel, is a modern Balder, who sums up all the culture of Central Europe. Eva and Ruth are symbolic of

Christian's interests. Eva is a celebrated dancer living in a sensuous atmosphere with no enduring satisfaction in all she represents. Ruth is a Jewish girl of the tenements, but a true Christian in her desire to bring peace on earth.

Throughout the strife for the culture of the old world, we find commercialism rearing its head more and more strongly. Albrecht Wahnschaffe boasts proudly to Wolfgang, son of the German steel kings,

> "We are one of the very great nations now, and have a body as well as a countenance." Weikhardt laments to Felix Imhof: "Humanity to-day has lost its faith. Faith has leaked out like water from a cracked glass. Our age is tyrannized by machinery: it is a mob rule without parallel. Who will save us from machinery and from business? The golden calf has gone mad. The spirit of man kowtows to a warehouse. Our watchword is to be up and doing. We manufacture Christianity, a renaissance, a culture, et cetera. Everything tends toward the external - towards expression, line, arabesque, gesture, mask. . . . Everything is the very latest, until something still later begins to function. Thus the soul flees, goodness ceases, the form breaks, and reverence dies. Do you feel no horror at the generation that is growing up?"

To which Imhof wisely advises, "Create, O artist, and don't philosophize."

Susan Rappard, French companion to Eva Sorel, complains to Christian, "We don't like the Prussians. They seem an arid folk, who save their money for soldiers and barracks. I haven't seen a real face. All men and women look alike. They may be worthy, no doubt they are; but they seem machine-made."

To Christian's rebuke that Eva herself is German born, Susan replies, "Bah, if a genius is cast forth from heaven and tumbles on the earth, it is blind and can not choose its place."

Of Christian himself Wiguniewski says, "I had no special liking for him from the start. He's too impenetrable, mysterious, spoiled, cold, and, if you will, too German."

With none of the Russians' admiration for the English, the Germans glory in their own superiority to their commercial rivals.

"It is a curious thing about the English," says Herr Wahnschaffe. "They are gradually becoming wholly dependent on us. Not only do they no longer manufacture machines of this type, but we have to send an expert to set them up and explain their workings. Who would have thought that possible ten years ago?"

"They frankly admit their inferiority in this respect," the director answered. "One of the gentlemen from Birmingham, whom we took through the works recently, expressed his utter amazement at our resistless progress. He said it was phenomenal. I gave him the most modest reason I could think of. I explained that we didn't have the English institution of the week-end, and this added five to six hours a week to our productive activity."

Class distinction we find almost as hide-bound as before, as evidenced in Crammon's remark that he doesn't like people who are déclassé. "Social classes are a divine institution; a man who interferes with them wounds his own character."

Amid the galaxy of characters we find many Tolstoian souls, travellers from Russia. There is Ivan Michailovitch who tells the story of his life in modern Russia - a story of crushed hearts, happiness stamped out, personalities destroyed - a life without center or light or hope - a world of hate and malevolence, of cruelty and darkness. He tells of Prince Jakovlev Grusin, a sort of elder Karamazov, in Novgorod, who starved his peasants, plundered his tenants, sent his officials to Siberia, violated girls, seduced women, drove his own sons to despair, spent his life in gluttony, drunkenness, and whoring, and heaped crime upon crime, only to enter a monastery at the age of seventy-four and kneel daily to God. One more Russian enigma. Szilcyhin sums up his countrymen's characteristics as follows:

"A Russian is capable of committing the most cruel murder, and of shedding tears, within the next hour, at the sound of a melancholy song.

He is capable of all wildness, excess, and horror, but also of magnanimity and self-abnegation. No transformation", he asserts, "is swifter or more terrible than his, from hate to love, love to hate, happiness to despair, faithfulness to treachery, fear to temerity. If you trust him and yield yourself to him, you will find him pliant, high-souled, and infinitely tender. Disappoint and maltreat him, however, and he will plunge into darkness and be lost in the darkness. He can give, give, give, without end or reflection to the point of fanatical selflessness. Not until he is hurled to the uttermost depths of hopelessness, does the beast in him awaken and crash into destruction all that is about him."

So in The World's Illusion Wassermann pits one against the other, Russian, French, English, and German, revealing in each outstanding traits that survive the old civilization and give birth to a new.

Little Man, What Now? By Hans Fallada

In Little Man, What Now? Hans Fallada has given us a picture of modern Germany in the throes of the same financial depression that has gripped the world in its tentacles. The atmosphere is more sordid than that of Buddenbrooks, but still the grosser parts are more delicately dealt with than in the Russian novels. Communism, sex, nudism, and that "iron filing on the index card of one's brain", fear of losing one's job, stalk through the book like four horsemen. Herr Mörschel, Johannes Pinneberg, Bunny, Heilbutt, and Jachmann, Mia's lover, are, it seems to me, merely the modern novelist's conception of this mad world gone topsy-turvy; as much American or French as German.

D. FRANCE

Introduction

Lest I be accused of misrepresentation, may I state at the outset that the false, hypocritical, cosmopolitan France, the only France that tourists on a visit to Paris ever meet, is no more typical

of the country than the blatant semi-sophisticated, egotistical, and self-sufficient Manhattanite is typical of America and Americans. Among the nations of the earth there exists no more striking contrast than that between the people of Paris and the people of France. (1) The French novel, however, is **not** for the young; "it is the fruit of maturity addressed to maturity."(2) France in her literature if taken literally is, perhaps, her own worst enemy. She loves to boast of her depravity rather than to practise it. May I venture to say that French literature is the Frenchman's relaxation from reality.

Religion

Unwilling to learn the lesson of toleration and forbearance the French are not a genuinely and deeply religious people; i.e. not in the German sense of the word. Religion as such is left largely to the French peasant. The majority of the educated French believe in a personal God and in another life - therewith they are content. With rites they demand religious observance. They are not satisfied with a civil marriage; their children must have confirmation and communion as a necessary part of their education; they call for a priest at a funeral. To conform - that is French - seeming rather than being. To an educated Frenchman religion is only a policeman. Like his morality his religion is a matter of calculation. Respectable behavior is the criterion of the first; outward observance of the second.(3)

Morals

Nor is the Frenchman's religion like the Russian's a thing apart. While possessing some of the same elements in a simpler form, yet it does carry over into his life in a practical manner. By that I mean a Frenchman's philosophy never allows his religion or his morals to interfere with his course of life. He does not practise self-denial.

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(1) French Life in Town and Country, Hannah Lynch

(2) French Novelists of To-day, Winifred Stephens

(3) France and the French, Karl Hillebrand

He agrees with La Bruyère that "everything is temptation to him who fears temptation." Therefore the prayer "lead us not into temptation" is rarely on his lips or in his heart. This Celtic-Latin race cannot be judged by strictly Teutonic standards. Their philosophy may now and then be Stoic but never ascetic. Society, in consequence, takes moral errors much more lightly than it does with us, as those who are familiar with French literature can but have noticed. There are probably far more white lies told in France than in America. Their abolition in France would revolutionize society. We who admire the smoothness, the well-oiled machinery on which French life moves could easily secure the same result if we would give due homage to the white lie. The truth is not a fetich to a Frenchman; the great thing is to have sufficient tact to know when to pervert it and sufficient elasticity to accomplish it with aplomb.

The young men of France of good families are, unlike their sisters, given their freedom at an early age. Even as students they set up an irregular mênage. Little blame is attached to them; they are even encouraged to sow their wild oats; but they are expected when they reach marriageable age to abandon their student liaisons and to found a family.(1) Another paradox incomprehensible to the foreigner is the attendance of French families at theater to enjoy the most salacious farces. The French see no harm in these plays, which are generally regarded as characteristically French. They divide life into watertight compartments and are left unaffected by the riotous imagination of the playwright. Everything, they claim, depends upon the point of view, and the French in their recreations admit much that they would not dream of

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(1) France and the French, Sisley Huddleston

admitting into their ordinary behavior. To be shocked, they argue, would be a sign of a depraved mind which confounds play-acting with reality.

Admitting that Paris is regarded as the home of vice, yet nothing in the streets offends the eye of the casual lounger. In Paris you have to look for manifestations of vice; you will find them in abundance, but they are not thrust under your nose.

Home Life

As Germany is man, Romain Rolland writes, "France is woman." There is no race on earth whose home-life is so enviable as that of the French. Both men and women bring the best of their qualities to the making and maintaining of this admirable domestic institution. French women are not perfect, we know, since they are human. Like others, they have their spites, their pettinesses, and their jealousies. They love money, and they save it. But whatever their faults, no race of women can show a smaller percentage of shrews and reckless mischief-makers. Their discretion is extraordinary in the equable, dignified nature of their domestic rule.(1)

Pretty faces are not, perhaps, more abundant in France than large eyes. They are rarer among women of a certain age than among girls - so much rarer that one infers that the effect of French life and manners is deteriorating to the more delicate beauties of feature and color.(2) The number of women one sees who have dyed hair is very large, but the French sense of economy prevents frequent renewal. It is unquestionably the country where women think most of dress. The domesticity cultivated by the German hearth is not the Frenchman's ambition for the French woman. His social instinct is uppermost and

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(1) Lynch, op. cit.

(2) French Traits, W. C. Brownell

he regards the family circle as altogether too narrow a sphere for his wife. To be the mother of his children and the nurse of his declining years is a destiny, which he would as little wish for her as she would for herself. To be the ornament of a society, to awake perpetual interest, to be perpetually and universally charming, to contribute powerfully to the general aims of her environment, never to lose her character as woman in any of the functions of woman's existence is a central motive of a French woman's life heartily approved by Frenchmen.(1) It is for this reason that she devotes so much attention to dress not as do women of other lands for the passion of dress in itself. The Frenchman has an instinctive repugnance to our American ideal of companionability. Nothing could be less seductive to him than this predominance of compatability over the feminine element, the element of sex. It never occurs to a French woman to regret her sex nor to feel it a limitation to her opportunities. She is never man's rival as she is in America. Hence the different attitude towards marriage. In France marriage is from earliest years the end and aim of a woman's existence. It is the deliberate aim of her parents for her. They constantly remind her of it. Failure to attain it is considered by her and by them the one great fault. The conception of "mariage de convenance" by no means excludes the idea of love; neither does the practice of it. No young girl in France looks forward to not loving her husband; she simply expects to learn to love him after marriage as American girls expect to do before. The result there as here is a lottery, but theirs is dependent upon old heads instead of upon young hearts. We Americans conceive marriage sentimentally; they conceive

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(1) Brownell op. cit.

it as an affair of reason. To love intensely and passionately is the French woman's ideal. It is so much her ideal that if marriage does not enable her to attain it, it is a virtue rather than a vice in her eyes to seek it elsewhere. To die before having attained its fulness is a source of tragic disaster.

The French husband becomes his wife's spiritual director. Following his own idea of making a companion of her, he arranges her reading, counsels the disposition of her leisure, and modifies the list of her acquaintance. If her family has been of different political or religious faith from his own, he at once undermines her prejudices. She is his wife, presiding over his household, entertaining his friends. She sees the world through his spectacles - such of it as he permits. Her amusements are subject to his approval; her study is such as he directs. Her destiny and glory are to be the mother of his children, the ornament of his fireside, his help-meet. Economy is her great and unlovable virtue. If she clips the wings of romance ruthlessly, it is ever in the interests of economy. She cheerfully makes every personal sacrifice heedful in order to arrange for her children suitable marriages. She lives for her husband and children and if, as in novels, she is found seeking the eternal passion outside the family roof, she never neglects her home interests. She is in all things the better half of the French people. She is too apt to encourage her son in the theory of wild oats-sowing, believing in the fixed conviction of her land that man is a tameless beast who cannot exist without fugitive loves throughout his chequered career. No wife should pry into her husband's habits outside the portals of his home. And a Frenchman though

unfaithful to his marriage contract still practises sentiment at home and by his pretty courtesies and his wife's dutiful blindness still retains the fireside intact.

Changes of the Great War

The world upheaval brought about many social changes in the greater freedom for unmarried women. While many French women were forced into professions and industry during the World War, and while they have won for themselves a greater emancipation than before, they will nevertheless have to go great lengths to catch up with their American and British sisters.

General Characteristics

Perhaps the greatest stumbling block in their path is French conservatism.(1) Their roots go deep and they turn continually toward the past. They are proud of their ancient origins and have a profound respect for tradition. Some observers report that France is a gay, light-hearted, reckless nation; others that she is drab and miserable because of her acquisitive greed. Both views are erroneous. While the French people are concerned with the saving of sous, they have a great capacity for merriment. Theirs is a laughing philosophy, accepting life as it is. They are realists - not the grim, dour kind, but realists in the sense that they make the best of circumstances. They are intellectually honest and temperamentally happy. The French mind is alert and logical, but here again they are the victims of convention. In the schools individuality is repressed rather than encouraged.(2) The boy is taught precisely along what lines he should reason. He accepts his philosophy ready-made; all is determined by tradition.

The Frenchman is not afraid to appear intelligent, however, as are so many Anglo-Saxons. Huddleston tells of a French lady of his

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(1) Huddleston op. cit.

(2) Huddleston op. cit.

acquaintance who declared that men in an English drawing-room could be induced to talk of nothing but horses and dogs, and, perhaps, casually, of the latest play. The Frenchman entirely devoid of embarrassment may tell you about his family affairs, even his relations with his wife. The Frenchman, says Huddleston, talks first to please himself - then his listener. The Frenchman is gay because he refuses to be crushed by the cares of life. He is naturally bright and quick. He jumps from idea to idea not from brilliancy of wit but from sheer animal spirits. To the Anglo-Saxon, French manners seem excessive. That is perhaps because English manners are in general so reserved and brusque or exhibiting in intimacy what Emerson called "unbuttoned ease".

French Literature of the 19th Century

As English-speaking men are given to saying things that they would not write, so are the French given to writing things that they would not utter. In discovering national traits in the French novel I must keep in mind always that a novelist chooses his characters from life, his incidents from imagination. The prevalence of murder in Shakespearian drama does not make the English a nation of murderers, nor does the Suicide Club of Stevenson's *New Arabian Nights* necessarily find its counterpart in English life. *Jane Eyre* does not prove the Englishman a bigamist nor *Daniel Deronda* a seducer. The French novelist finds nothing of interest in the French stereotyped courtship nor in the mariage de convenance; therefore, he chooses adultery as his theme. After all, novels are written to sell.

M. Bergeret in Paris by Anatole France

M. Bergeret in Paris is the fourth chronicle in a series of novels dealing with contemporary Parisian life. The author, Anatole

France, uses the novel to express his opinions on men and things. In the previous chronicles, which with *M. Bergeret* make up *L'Histoire Contemporaire*, Monsieur Bergeret, a professor anchored to a small university town and longing for the company of his intellectual equals in Paris, is separated from his wife because of her infidelity. He migrates to Paris where he becomes the center of a network of Royalist conspiracies and church politics. The whole pageant of religious and political bureaucracy passes in review and is found wanting. Even Riquet, the dog, is selfishly human. Old Angélique tries to force upon M. Bergeret the conventions of the French household and heartily frowns upon his smallest lapses. Like a true Frenchman M. Bergeret still receives great pleasure from contemplating the beauty of living forms. Through the mouth of M. Bergeret, Anatole France preaches socialism and world peace, all the time emphasizing the intense conservatism of France.

Jean Christophe, by *Romain Rolland*

Jean Christophe, by Romain Rolland, is a tragedy of a whole generation perpetually in quest of truth and liberty - a Hamletian generation intensely intellectual, sensitive, and chivalrous, struggling toward a loftier faith and a fuller life. The author, Rolland, although born in the heart of France, is very unFrench. Perhaps this alienation is a heritage from his Morvan ancestors who were German woodsmen driven westward by the exhaustion of the timber lands. Rolland has a mind distinctly European. He is a worshipper of Tolstoi, of Beethoven, of Wagner, and of Michael Angelo. In Jean Christophe he created for himself one more hero.

The book is a story of a great German musician who goes

to France, where his life is a series of violent reactions. Two widely divergent manifestations of French temperament are offered in Corinne, the pleasure-loving French actress; and Antoinette Jeannin, the young French governess, sister of Jean's friend Olivier. Olivier represents Rolland as he is; Jean as he would like to be.(1) As Rolland depicts here a false and a true Germany distinguishing between her maudlin sentimentality and her robust, noble idealism, so he paints a purely social France. Antoinette personifies the real France, the France of sacrifice, of duty, of delicate conservatism, of rigid economy for self and generous outlay for some treasured ideal, child, or cause.(2) The novel in structure resembles War and Peace in its picture of the continuity of life in the grand epic style.

Christophe reading in a French anthology comes upon this truth, "The German was born to live in the region of the soul. He has not the light noisy gaiety of the Frenchman. He is a great soul, his affections are tender and profound. He is indefatigable in toil and persevering in enterprise. There is no more moral or long-lived people." Christophe finds it difficult to become accustomed to the unbridled independence of French writers. To the eyes of the freest Germans accustomed to order and discipline, it looks like anarchy. On the other hand, Reinhart, Christophe's friend who lends him these books, thinks the French a clever people, amiable, talkative, but frivolous, without music, philosophy, or poetry; people of pathos, exaggerated speech, gesticulation, and pornography. Christophe feels that German artists lay bare their souls with a complacent tenderness. They open the sluice gates of pent-up emotion. In the depths of the overflow is

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(1) French Novelists of Today, Second Series, Winifred Stephens.

(2) Twentieth Century French Writers, Mary Duclaux

German thought. In Germans he finds greatness and weakness equally. He refers to them as "a race whose shifting thought flows like the greatest river of music and poetry at which Europe comes to drink." He objects to their habit of "undressing their hearts in public". His idea of Parisians, until he meets the little French governess, is that they spend too much time in love-making and revolutions. But the little governess changes all that. She assures him that there are serious people also in France. Unlike the Germans the French have no more in their minds and hearts than they show.

In Volume II of Jean Christophe we meet Sylvain Kohn again. In true Van Dyke appreciation he assures Jean that "France (not just Paris) is a woman" and if you want to succeed, you must make up to women. Upon meeting some of Kohn's dilettante friends, Christophe finds this boast true, for as a matter of fact, to them women and literature were only two aspects of the same subject: for their literature was concerned with nothing but women, and their women were concerned with nothing but literature.

Like most Germans Christophe had thought music subordinate in France. Upon attending a concert with the critic Goujart, he compared music in Paris to those poor workingmen who share a lodging: when one of them leaves the bed, the other creeps into the warm sheets. Then, too, he marvelled at the extraordinary number of concerts in Paris. The newspapers, also, Jean found very Parisian - all sex crimes. He had a chaste Germanic prejudice against Latin immorality. French writers were never on very good terms with virtue. French conservatism, too, came in for its share of criticism. He claimed that there was no

country in the world that had so firmly rooted a cult of its great-grandfathers. The rest of the universe did not interest them. Many of the intelligent read nothing not written in France, outside of King Lear and Hamlet. Hypocrisy in Germany, he announced, consisted of talking about idealism while thinking only of one's own interests; but the French he found worse - they covered lewdness with the names of Art and Beauty. Theirs was Art for art's sake! Pleasure for pleasure's sake! Emptiness, idleness, impotence - a nation of fanatics, - fanatics for the pleasure of it.

Interesting, too, is Christophe's comparison of the national music. German music was often mediocre, he admitted, even coarse, but always of the soul. "In France music is gathered carefully, drop by drop, and passed through Pasteur filters into bottles, and then corked. Stale!"

When Olivier speaks of teaching morality in French schools, Jean asks if there is enough to keep him talking ten minutes. Olivier represents the wide culture and psychological genius of France.

"Like all foreigners", he remonstrates with Jean, "you attach an exaggerated importance to our novels, and our boulevard plays, and the intrigues of our politicians. If you like I will show you women who never read novels, girls in Paris who have never been to the theater, men who have never bothered their heads about politics, - yes, even among our intellectuals."

Olivier knew Parisians in the garrets of Paris who served a faith, who were imbued with the age-old immemorial spirit of the Crusades. "You judge the French," he went on, "by wretched creatures who prey upon her" - a pseudo-élite that fastens on Paris and blows loud the trumpet of publicity that the voices of the rest of France are drowned. Led by Olivier, what Jean saw of inner France upset all his

preconceived ideas about the character of the French. Instead of a gay, sociable, careless, brilliant people, he saw "men of headstrong and close temper, living in isolation, wrapped about with a seeming optimism, like a gleaming mist, while they were in fact steeped in a deep-rooted and serene pessimism, possessed by fixed ideas, intellectual passions, indomitable souls, which it would have been easier to destroy than alter." He found the Jews, however, the only people in France to whom he could talk of things vital; for them the past did not exist. With the French one can discuss only things of yesterday. He found the French a people of contradictions: a people of elegance, beautiful gestures, attitudes, yet never writing ballets though they should be able to create an inimitable art of poetic dancing; a people of laughter and comedy, yet never composing comic operas or leaving it to minor musicians - "confectioners of music". "If I were a Frenchman", he averred, "I would set Rabelais to music; I would write comic epics." They were a people of story-tellers but never wrote novels in music. "You make no use of your gift of psychoanalysis, your insight into character," contended Christophe. "If I were a Frenchman, I would give you portraits in music."

"There are no frontiers in art," countered Olivier. "They are not so much barriers between races as barriers between classes. I'm not so sure there is a French art or a German art: but there is certainly one art for the rich and another for the poor."

In volume III Rolland assures the reader through Marthe Langeais, that the women of France are often much superior to the men. In Minna we find the average tourist knowledge of France. She knew Paris.

Had she not been to the Folies-Bergère, the Opéra, the Montmartre, and Saint-Cloud? All women of Paris were cocottes, bad mothers, had as few children as possible, and did not look after them. They left them at home when they went to the theater or to haunts of pleasant vice.

In Grazia's letter, Christophe reads that it is impossible to like the French, but they are very intelligent. That is their saving grace. It laves their weaknesses and regenerates them. When you think they are down, beaten, perverted, they find new youth in the ever-bubbling spring of their minds.

Men of Good Will, by Jules Romains

In Men of Good Will, a novel of the "literary garbage" variety, we find what is tagged the "typically French novel." Its pages reek with foul odors and are dyed scarlet with adulteries. Even the bus is a fit setting for seduction. The French newspaper displays an editorial protesting against the reputation for easy virtue attributed to French women, while on page 3 it describes a scene of Parisian adultery with the air of applauding it and envying people who could amuse themselves like that. The story was what "people" thought; the editorial what "people" pretended to think.

Passion's Pilgrims, by Jules Romains

In Passion's Pilgrims, realistic sequel to Men of Good Will, we find sex for sex's sake the intimate theme. Even Macaire, the dog, promenades in the interests of the oldest profession of them all. Contrary to French reality, Mlle. Bernadine takes pleasure in putting her niece, Jeanne, face to face with the crudities of life. "Marriage", she assures her, "doesn't mean kissing in a carriage or looking for an apartment."

The women are represented by Romains as discussing with

great intensity the advantages of the double bed of France versus the twin bed practice of Germany. Their philosophy seems to be that "it is not with a beaver coat that you win the love of a man; it is with the love of a man that, later on, you buy a beaver coat."

Jerphanion, one of Passion's Pilgrims, decides to "gather his rosebuds." He searches Paris cafés and prostitutes' quarters with the idea that every woman in Paris belongs to some man. Women, he concludes, are like buying lottery tickets. They take a chance on some man's marrying them - and keep on buying tickets.

Nowhere in these two novels of Romains is there the delicate philosophy of Rolland. They are typically modern French novels - novels that give the public an entirely erroneous idea of the French people as they really are.

IV. Summary

In developing my problem of comparing national characteristics of the upper middle-class nationals in the nineteenth century, I have taken as a hypothesis Taine's theory of primitive and secondary imprints:(1) the former an outgrowth of heritage which has reconciled itself to surroundings geographical and climatic; in other words, the natural heritage; the latter those characteristics stamped above by the complexity of modern existence and the changes wrought by inter-racial contacts and by events of supreme economic import.

Fundamentally the various nationalities herein treated prove true to their primitive imprints as exemplified in the heroes of their

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(1) Taine - op. cit.

national epics: Beowulf for the English, Vladímir the Fair Sun for the Russians, Siegfried for the Germans, and Roland for the French.

The secondary imprint, the individuality cultivated from the basic roots, may seem in times of war or of great economic stress to have grown hybrid, but history gives evidence that nations move in cycles and that reversion, in an advanced stage, of course, is inevitable.

In religion and in morals the English of the Victorian era hearkened to the voice of Mrs. Grundy until the Great War loosened repressions and freed inhibitions as it dragged in the dust the "large white plumes" of youth.

Educating only the mentally fit, England graduates a youth trained physically to conquer and mentally to command. Populating her colonies with younger sons of this ilk, she enlarges England's glory and sets an example for the Germans and the French. She is a country of men where men are glorified and women are taught to consider male comforts and pleasures.

As a nation of great men England produced a great literature, and as the Victorian age was an era of characters in life so it was, too, in fiction.

I chose five novels for examples of English character. Exton Manor, by Archibald Marshall, pictures the English country life in a small parish dominated by Lady Wrotham whose financial support tinged the religious precepts taught by the vicar. Tono-Bungay, by H. G. Wells, shows the English glorification of trade. The Balliols, by Alec Waugh, depicts a Victorian family living through the Votes for Women demonstrations and the sloughing off of Victorian inhibitions as the

Edwardian era succeeded. With the advent of the War we see the daughters and sons of the sweet Victorian woman and the "not so good as he seemed" man taking their fun where they found it, yet exhibiting Beowulfian characteristics on the field of battle, emerging to confront a younger generation as Victorian as their mothers and fathers but with more honesty and less fear of Mrs. Grundy. The Forsyte Saga, by John Galsworthy, from which this thesis grew, pictures in Soames the Englishman incarnate in his sense of property which included even Irene. All the Forsytes exhibit a "having nature" expressed "each in his own tongue." Forsytism was England. A Modern Comedy, by John Galsworthy, continues the Forsytes through the Edwardian and Georgian generations showing Soames watching with intense interest the ironic callousness induced by the Great War. Forsytism still flourishes but with fewer deceits and more openness, and religion has found its haven in ethics.

In all that a Russian of the nineteenth century thought and did we note a strong passion for God with a belief that His finger is in every accident, crime, or intrigue. This deep religious trait, however, guarantees nothing in the way of moral conduct, for we find the Russian with a perverted idea of veracity and honor. Hospitality, however, is an outstanding virtue and a marked feature of all classes.

For his heritage the Russian has a dual nature: the one derived from the wandering Mongol is that of the dreamer, the mystical ikon-worshipper, the idle fatalist; the other derived from the Slav snaps the knout and indulges in orgies of cruel tortures.

Because of Russian repression, the literature takes the form of a refuge for political and religious discussions. This literature is

not destined to give pleasure; it must picture social injustices, ideals of family life, and ineffectual gropings after a philosophy.

I have chosen five novels to exemplify Russian traits. Fathers and Children, by Ivan Turgenev, portrays the ineffective Russian nobility with a genuine Russian respect for all things English. In A House of Gentlefolk, by Ivan Turgenev, we see the truly Russian type, a Hamletian hero, cultivated and intelligent, but full of theories for the improvement of mankind. Anna Karenina, by Leo Tolstoi, portrays the thinking Russian groping for a solution to the eternal questions that face humanity. Tolstoi never fails to make the reader realize that the Russian male is attracted by the physical. The Russian woman envies the freedom of her English cousins yet realizes that such independence is not possible for her. Russian fate everywhere dominates the board. In its vastness and scope, War and Peace, by Leo Tolstoi, resembles more closely the Galsworthian Saga. It is intrinsically Russian in its religious atmosphere of incense and blessed ikons. Here again, the sex of the realists plays its part. The Brothers Karamazov, by Féodor Dostoievsky, presents a psychological analysis of the Slavic sadist warring with the Hamletian Mongol. Brawls and sadistic orgies mingle with socialism and anarchism striving vainly to grope toward a belief in immortality without which the Russian decides there can be no virtue. The Russian's conceit and ignorance, his dishonesty, his skepticism, his cruelty, and his idealism all find a place in the pages of this novel.

With a sincere determination to eschew all books evidencing war bias, the writer has surveyed German characteristics with the

following deductions. In Germany religion is more a matter of head than of heart. There is there less profession of religion with perhaps more dignified and sincere worship than in England. Church festivals in particular are observed with due rites. Religion carries over into ethics, as in England ethics has for the Georgian generation become a substitute for religion. German women envy English women, for in Germany a woman is in Kiplingesque "only a woman" to be addressed with shows of courtesy and gallantry that promise much but prove hollow mockery. A German household even more than an English is run for the male. In marriage the dowry plays a vital part. Since the German husband must be established before he can support a house, there is frequently a disparity in ages that does not argue well for congeniality in tastes. Education to the German is all-important, and literature, music, and drama hold a vital place in German national life. Together with this love of the arts we find a counter-balance of scientific investigation and sound commercialism, which keep the idealistic minded among the Germans from resembling their ineffectual Russian neighbors.

German literature of the latter nineteenth century with the exception of the field of drama is not noteworthy. This fact complicated the problem of choosing novels to exemplify the above-named German characteristics. Effi Briest, by Theodor Fontane, portrays the German marriage with its uncongeniality of disparity in years ending in the triangle. This marriage, a military one, is supposed to represent the ideal of every German girl of aristocratic family. Buddenbrooks, by Thomas Mann, is another Galsworthian gallery. Like the Saga, it smacks of family, of class, and of property. The religion of the Buddenbrooks

takes on a practical family aspect. Practicality dominates the Buddenbrook soul, which only now and then raises itself from the business world to evince evidence that it, too, is descended from Schuberts and Schumanns, from Schillers and Goethes. The World's Illusion, by Jakob Wassermann, is as tremendous as War and Peace in its scope. Commercialism is here rearing its head even more strongly and glorying in its superiority to rivals, especially English. Class distinction is hidebound. Here, too, we find evidence of the Slav tendencies of the Russian ending in an ineffectual religious worship entirely devoid of ethical principles. In Little Man, What Now?, by Hans Fallada, we have modern Germany in the throes of an economic struggle with communism, sex, nudism, and economic ruin stalking like the four horsemen through the pages of the novel.

Since the Paris of tourists and the France of reality are as different as the French life and the French novel, the writer in this section of the thesis engaged in exhaustive research in order to determine the true French character. The writer concludes that French literature is the Frenchman's relaxation from reality.

Religion in France is left largely to the peasant class; the educated French are content to observe rites, to believe in a personal God, and in another life. To conform is French. Moral errors are taken more lightly than here in America, and French life moves with a well-oiled smoothness based upon the white lie and a blind acceptance of a very definite double standard.

Economy is the national virtue or vice (according to one's manner of thinking). The French woman is content to be an ornament to

society and to play a perpetually feminine role. She never vies with the man in his field; therefore the French look upon marriage as woman's sphere. The mariage de convenance seems here to work out successfully because a dutiful French wife is blind to her husband's short-comings.

The French are as conservative as the English in their respect for tradition. They are realists; not grim and dour but happily philosophical in their acceptance of circumstances.

Their literature frequently falls short of portraying the typical French. For examples I have chosen two novels that portray the French as they are and two novels known as "typically French." *M. Bergeret in Paris*, by Anatole France, deals with Parisian life in the latter nineteenth century. It evidences French conservatism, religion, and convention. *Jean Christophe* in three volumes, by Romain Rolland, like *War and Peace* and the *World's Illusion*, offers a world of characters personifying the idealism, sacrifice, rigid economy, and delicate conservatism of France. The French writers seem never to be on good terms with virtue, yet the author emphasizes through the mouth of Olivier the difference between French novels and plays and French life. He pictures the women as superior to the men, but the French as a whole unbeaten like Roland and finding new youth in the ever-vibrant joy of living. *Men of Good Will*, by Jules Romains, is the "typical French novel" imprinted with scarlet letters and trumpeting the easy virtue of the French woman. *Passion's Pilgrims*, by the same author, is a sequel to *Men of Good Will*. Here the characters revel in sex discussions, in prostitutes' hovels, and in sex perversion of all kinds - one more "typically French novel" giving the reader an entirely erroneous idea of

France and the French.

From my intensive study of nineteenth century national characteristics in England, Russia, Germany, and France as an outgrowth of the primitive imprints evidenced in the national epics of these respective countries, and from my reading of typical novels (cited above) that carry on through the twentieth century, I feel justified in asserting that these nations in their respective manners and customs are proving true to the Taine theory taken as my hypothesis.

In morals, home-life, and general characteristics we find these four nations still revolving in their individual grooves: England with her "having nature", cold, intellectual Forsytes still; Russia with beaurocratic despotism masquerading as communism; ineffectual, stumbling, suppressed - the soul of the Slav crushing the spirit of the Mongol; Germany obedient, heroic, temporarily broken by the betrayal of her leaders; France with her drawing-room manners, her finesse, her seeming rather than being.

Taine says that it is "chiefly by the study of literature that one may construct a moral history, and advance toward the knowledge of psychological laws, from which events spring." (1) Literature he considers great as it represents the mode of being of a whole nation and a whole age. So in presenting the characteristics of the people of Exton Manor, the Forsytes and the Balliols, the Bazarovs, the Lavretskys, the Kareninas, the Bolkonskys, the Karamazovs, the Buddenbrooks, the Wahnschaffes, the Christophes, the Oliviers, I have painted the latter nineteenth century upper middle-class nationals of England, Russia, Germany, and France, and in these character portrayals I have shown that

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(1) Taine - op. cit.

national character is a vital force in the novel.

V. Bibliography

This bibliography is selective rather than all-inclusive. A complete bibliography for this thesis would almost duplicate the Boston Public Library card catalogue on Manners and Customs, Religion, and Literary Criticism under England, Russia, Germany, and France. Novels, too, have been read, judged not typical, and abandoned. The references here listed will give without duplication of facts the salient information for the student of character as evidenced in comparative nineteenth century novels of England, Russia, Germany, and France.

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